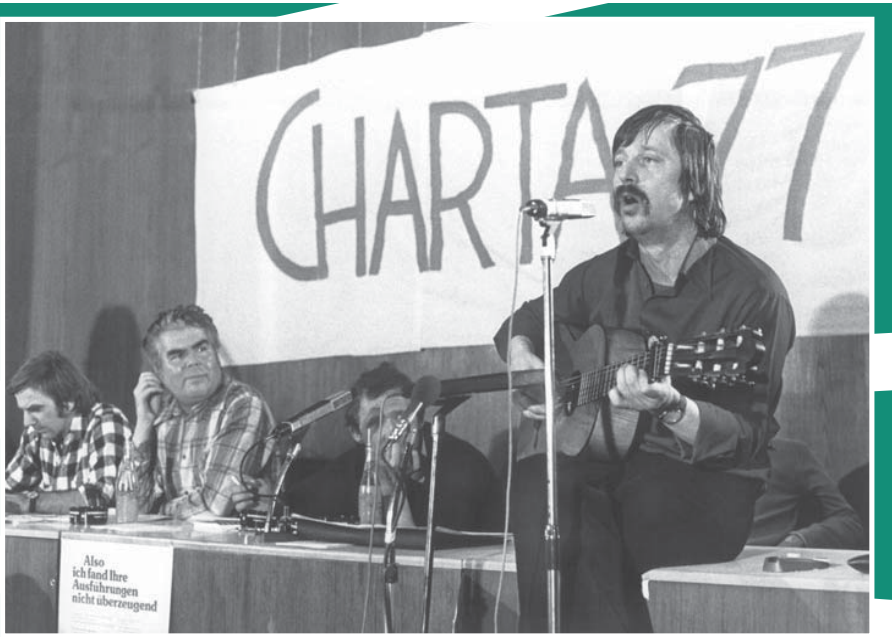
Robert Brier (ed.)

Entangled Protest



Transnational Approaches to the History of Dissent in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union

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Entangled Protest

EINZELVERÖFFENTLICHUNGEN DES
DEUTSCHEN HISTORISCHEN INSTITUTS WARSCHAU

31

Edited by
EDUARD MÜHLE

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Transnational Approaches to the History of Dissent in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union

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Cover picture:

Meeting held in Frankfurt, West Germany on 27 March 1977 in support of Charter 77. The people on the photo are (from left to right): Rudi Dutschke, Jiří Pelikán, Adam Michnik (hidden behind the microphones), and Wolf Biermann.

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Preface and Acknowledgements

The photograph on the cover of this book was taken on 27 March 1977 in Frankfurt, West Germany. It depicts from left to right: Rudi Dutschke, the East German born figurehead of the student protests that had rocked the FRG in the late 1960s; Jiří Pelikán, a former director of Czechoslovak television who had fled his country in 1969 to Italy where he joined the socialist party and became an activist for human rights in eastern Europe; Adam Michnik (hidden behind the microphones), a Polish intellectual who had been a leading figure of student unrests in 1968 and who would become one of the main theoreticians of the Polish opposition movement; Wolf Biermann (playing guitar), a singer-songwriter from the GDR whom the East German authorities had forced into exile in the Federal Republic just a few months earlier. The picture was taken by Milan Horáček, another political refugee from Czechoslovakia who would later become a founding member of the West German Green party. The banner behind the four people on the panel gives the reason for their meeting: the signing of the 'Charter 77'. A petition against human rights violations in Czechoslovakia, the Charter 77 became an iconic text of 'dissent' or 'dissidence' – a new form of political protest that had first emerged in the Soviet Union in the late 1960s.

Sharing a transnational perspective on the history of dissidence, the individual chapters in this book show that the photograph from Frankfurt documents a central aspect of the dissident experience: The similarities between individual movements of dissent – legality, openness, an anti-political approach and a focus on human rights – were not simply a result of the similarities of the communist systems of the Soviet bloc; the dissidents, instead, perceived each other's activities, they held conversations across borders and exchanged ideas, and they saw each other as engaged in a common struggle in which they supported one another.

The fact that the meeting took place in Frankfurt highlights another central theme about these transnational entanglements: the importance of western audiences and interlocutors. With its focus on human rights, dissent presupposed an imagined 'court of world opinion' to which the dissidents appealed for help. A central aim of their activism was thus to reach western audiences in order to raise international awareness for their situation. This insight leads to new questions about dissent: Which intermediar-

ies granted the dissidents access to western audiences? Why did their message resonate with the concerns, ideas or values of people in the west? Answering these and other questions, the contributions to this book demonstrate how the history of dissent was part of broader changes which transformed international politics during the 1970s and 1980s: the eclipse of Marxism, the rise of human rights, the emergence of new forms of transnational activism focused on peace and ecology or the search for new forms of democracy.

The presence in Frankfurt of someone like Dutschke, finally, shows that the transnational history of dissent defies easy categorization according to standard narratives of the cold war. Relating dissidence to the intellectual and political processes of the 1970s and 1980s shows us how dissidents were integrated in transnational, even global changes without having to align their history with an 'end-of-the cold-war-trajectory'.

The publication of this book is a welcome opportunity to thank its many 'parents'. The idea for this book was born at the international conference 'Transnational Perspectives on Dissent and Opposition in Central and Eastern Europe', held 17-20 September 2010 at the German Historical Institute in Warsaw and jointly organized by Agnes Arndt and myself. It was a pleasure to conceptualize and organize the conference with Agnes and I would like to thank her for her many insights and great work. I also gratefully acknowledge her contributions to the early stages of producing this book as she read some of the texts and provided helpful ideas and suggestions.

I would also like to thank all speakers, commentators, panel chairs and participants at the conference for making it an extraordinary and intellectually stimulating event. The conference could not have taken place without the support of the directors of the two institutions involved: Eduard Mühle from the German Historical Institute in Warsaw and Martin Sabrow of the Centre for Contemporary History in Potsdam. As always, the staff of the German Historical Institute proved a formidable team in dealing with the practical aspects of organizing such a multinational, multilingual event.

I am indebted to Eduard Mühle for including this volume into the publication series of the German Historical Institute. It would never have gone into print without the invaluable help of Matthias Mundt, Elise Berresheim, Philipp Krug, Philipp Schedl, and, most importantly, Małgorzata Sparenberg. Philip Jacobs of 'English Exactly' did a superb job in editing the manuscript and translating Tomáš Vilímek's text. I also want to thank Maja Latyński for translating Wanda Jarząbek's article. Last but not least, I am grateful to the authors for submitting their excellent contributions and for their patience with my editorial suggestions.

Robert Brier

I. Theoretical Approaches, General Themes, Methodological Challenges

ROBERT BRIER

ENTANGLED PROTEST

DISSENT AND THE TRANSNATIONAL HISTORY OF THE 1970S AND 1980S

'A spectre is haunting Eastern Europe: the spectre of what in the West is called "dissent".' Thus begins Václav Havel's famous essay 'The Power of the Powerless' ('Moc bezmocných') – a text which simultaneously described and shaped a new form of politics which had begun to emerge in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in the late 1960s.[1] Neither working within the institutions of the communist systems nor trying to overthrow them, 'dissent' instead began with individual acts of defiance. Havel famously illustrated this with the parable of a greengrocer who placed the slogan 'Workers of the world unite!' in the window of his shop, 'among the onions and carrots'. The greengrocer did not need to believe this slogan for it to have an effect; what he communicated with the slogan was not a quotation from the *Communist Manifesto* but his own subordination: 'I, the greengrocer XY, live here and I know what I must do. I behave in the manner expected of me. I can be depended upon and am beyond reproach. I am obedient and therefore I have the right to be left in peace.'[2]

In spite of the greengrocer's indifference to the slogan's meaning, ideology nevertheless played an important role in Havel's analysis of post-totalitarianism: it cloaked the greengrocer's obedience in a statement of lofty principles. In this way, Havel argued, ideology superficially bridged the 'yawning abyss' between the 'aims of life … moving toward the fulfilment of its own freedom' and the 'aims of the system'. The 'post-totalitarian system', therefore, was 'a world of appearances trying to pass for

[1] Václav Havel, 'The Power of the Powerless', trans. Paul Wilson, *International Journal of Politics* 15, 3/4 (1985), 23-96, at 23. The essay was first published in Czech in 1978. An unpaginated version of Paul Wilson's English translation is available on Havel's official website at www.vaclavhavel.cz/showtrans.php?cat=eseje&val=-2_aj_eseje.html&typ=HTML (accessed Aug. 2013).

[2] Havel, 'Power of the Powerless', 27-28.

reality'; to live within it meant 'to live within a lie'. And by living this lie, the greengrocer became complicit in the system's oppressive rule.[3]

But if ideology was the pillar of this system, Havel believed, it was also its Achilles heel. Resistance to it could begin with the individual choice to abandon 'living within the lie' and to start 'an attempt to live within the truth'. By ceasing to put phony ideological slogans into his shop display, by publicly manifesting his dissent from the system's ideology, the greengrocer was sure to suffer repression, but he achieved a significant triumph nonetheless. He 'shattered the world of appearances, the fundamental pillar of the system. He has shown everyone that it is possible to live within the truth'. With his example, the greengrocer could awaken among his fellow citizens what Havel considered a universal longing of human beings 'for dignity and fundamental rights'.[4] This longing was the 'power of the powerless'; awakening it through a multitude of individual acts of defiance, Havel believed, could have corrosive consequences for the system.

Influential though it was, not all those branded 'dissidents' shared Havel's existentialist philosophy. What they did share was his belief that, in order to change the communist systems of the Soviet bloc, one had to begin by stepping outside of the framework they set out for social life – resistance began with an act of dissent. These political practices of dissent, their prehistory and evolution are the subject of this book. It is thus a contribution to what Barbara Falk has called an 'emerging historiography of dissent' – a movement of researchers from east and west who, drawing on the broad range of source which became available since 1989, invigorate the study of Soviet bloc protest movements.[5]

The individual contributions to this volume demonstrate that movements of dissent and opposition in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union were transnational phenomena. On one hand, this means that the similarities between them were not only the result of the similarities of the systems they were rebelling against, but also resulted from the reciprocal perceptions of the dissidents of one another, from the contacts that they established, and from the cross-border conversations that they held. On the other hand, the contributions to this book also highlight that the transnational connections in which dissidents participated were not restricted to the eastern bloc but cut across the 'iron curtain' as well: the dissident experience drew heavily on the imagery of a 'court of world opinion' to which the dissidents could appeal as they sought help against political repression;

[3] Ibid., 29-31.

[4] Ibid., 39-40, 42.

[5] Barbara J. Falk, 'Resistance and Dissent in Central and Eastern Europe: An Emerging Historiography', *East European Politics & Societies* 25, 2 (2011), 318-360.

raising international awareness for their plight was thus a constitutive element in the dissidents' political tactics. This simple observation raises a whole range of new questions about dissent. Since the dissidents lived in oppressive political systems which restricted travel and the ability to communicate across borders: which intermediaries, discourses or structures allowed the dissidents to overcome these obstacles and address western audiences? How did this affect the dissidents' message? Why, simply put, would people in the west listen to what the dissidents had to say? Addressing these questions highlights that many of the activists described in this book participated in transnational processes which transformed world politics during the 1970s and 1980s: the eclipse of Marxism and of other political discourses that were focused on large scale social transformation; the rise of human rights from the obscure texts of international law to being a rallying cry of social activism; the emergence of transnational discourses addressing peace and ecology.

In the remainder of this chapter, I will begin with a discussion of the two essential terms of this book: 'dissent' and 'transnational'. On this basis, I will highlight how the contributions to this book substantiate the two observations mentioned above and discuss a number of themes that help to put the history of dissent into the transnational history of the 1970s and 1980s.

Defining 'Dissent'

In 'The Power of the Powerless' Havel wrote that 'dissent' and 'dissident' were labels foreign observers had applied to him and to his fellow activists; they themselves, he insisted, used these terms only 'with distaste, rather ironically' and always in quotation marks.[6] For Jonathan Bolton, Havel's text is 'nothing if not a sustained polemic with the word [dissent] and the idea'.[7] Why use the term 'dissent' in this book?

Matters are complicated further by the fact that the term dissent was closely associated with another problematic term: 'totalitarianism'. Asked about the possibility of democratic changes in communist societies, Polish intellectual Jacek Kuroń replied that he would prefer to classify the system in Poland as 'totalitarian' rather than 'communist'.[8] Havel used the term

[6] Havel, 'Power of t he Powerless', 58.

[7] Jonathan Bolton, *Worlds of Dissent: Charter 77, the Plastic People of the Universe, and Czech Culture under Communism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2012), 2.

[8] Jacek Kuroń, *Polityka i odpowiedzialność* (Londyn: "Aneks", 1984), 44.

'post-totalitarian' instead. But he hastened to explain that this did not mean that the system had ceased to be totalitarian, but merely implied that it was a new kind of totalitarian dictatorship.[9] Few other dissident writers bothered to add similar qualifications; describing the political system of the Soviet bloc as 'totalitarian' was one of the few features virtually all dissidents had in common.[10]

Given this characterization of communist societies as (post-)totalitarian, Havel's allegorical greengrocer had but two choices: he could continue to play the system's game, perpetuate its lies and thus sustain it, or he could begin a 'life in truth', step outside the ideological framework of the system and hopefully become part of a movement for changing it. While Havel strongly rejected the elitist associations of the term 'dissident', his analysis nevertheless implied that there were only two relevant groups in the post-totalitarian system: the representatives of the all-powerful system and the courageous few who resisted it. The experience of society at large was thus reduced to compliance and apathy and dismissed as irrelevant. Over the past thirty years, historians have exposed this view of social life under communism as a caricature.[11]

Few authors doubt that the countries of the Warsaw Pact were authoritarian and repressive. More often than not, however, the ruling communist parties failed to mould societies in the ideological images of Marxism-Leninism. Even during the worst periods of Soviet Stalinism, party structures were rarely efficient instruments for enforcing totalitarian rule.[12] But even if power was executed effectively, it could be, as researchers writing in the vein of Michel Foucault have shown, not only restrictive, but productive as well. It could create new social subjects and thus set in motion social dynamics which the party could neither foresee nor control.[13] The

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[9] Havel, 'Power of the Powerless', 27.

[10] Jacques Rupnik, 'Le totalitarisme vu de l'Est', in Guy Hermet, ed., *Totalitarismes* (Paris: Economica, 1984), 43-71.

[11] For a survey and personal account of the revisionist historiography in Soviet history see Sheila Fitzpatrick, 'Revisionisms in Soviet History', *History and Theory* 46, 4 (2007), 77-91.

[12] J. Arch Getty, *Origins of the Great Purges: The Soviet Communist Party Reconsidered, 1933–1938* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

[13] Stephen Kotkin, *Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as a Civilization* (Berkeley, CA et al.: University of California Press, 1995); Katherine A. Lebow, 'Public Works, Private Lives: Youth Brigades in Nowa Huta in the 1950s', *Contemporary European History* 10, 2 (2001), 199-219; Jochen Hellbeck, *Revolution on My Mind: Writing a Diary under Stalin* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2006); Malte Rolf, 'Norm, Abweichung und Aneignung: Kulturelle Konventionen und unkonventionelle Kulturen in der Nachkriegssowjetunion', *Totalitarismus und Demokratie / Totalitarianism and Democracy* 2, 4 (2007),

social and cultural history of communism also made notions like 'subordination' and 'resistance' complicated. The greengrocer's placing the slogan into his shop window could have been a subtle act of resistance: placing the slogan precisely 'among the onions and carrots' the greengrocer may have exposed the very pretentiousness of the system's desire for total control. By dutifully enacting the regime's slogans even in the most bizarre of places, the citizens of communist societies ridiculed and thus subverted those slogans.[14] At the very least, the kind of outward compliance displayed by Havel's allegoric figure could help social groups to carve out niches for themselves where they pursued individual life projects based on their own values.[15] In aggregate, these processes created social facts the systems had to reckon with.

Society, in sum, was not a grey mass apathetically enacting the system's ideology; it shaped the history of the communist systems more than the small group of dissidents ever did. Yet precisely by highlighting how social life *within* the structures of the communist party state was radically more complex and dynamic than the theory of totalitarianism suggests, the social and cultural history of communism has confirmed an important aspect of Havel's analysis. The greengrocer may have been able to ridicule the system by placing its slogan among the onions and carrots; once he refused to put it up, however, that is, once he publicly manifested and articulated his *dissent* from the lines set out by the party state, he would have to suffer the consequences. Within or underneath its social and political frameworks, the communist systems of central and eastern Europe were able to accommodate social change and even forms of resistance. Almost every country in the east bloc, moreover, had its social niches such as the churches or the countryside; yet those were niches granted by the state. Whenever people

225-242. In a different way, the 'consumer socialism' of the 1960s and 1970s was a project steered from above which ended up undermining communist rule by creating social expectations the eastern European governments could not meet. Philipp Heldmann, *Herrschaft, Wirtschaft, Anoraks: Konsumpolitik in der DDR der Sechzigerjahre* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003). For a sophisticated view of how 1970s television programs helped to stabilize the Czechoslovak regime see Paulina Bren, *The Greengrocer and his TV: The Culture of Communism after the 1968 Prague Spring* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2010).

[14] Cf. Falk, 'Resistance and Dissent', 320.

[15] Paul Betts, *Within Walls: Private Life in the German Democratic Republic* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); Christopher Görlich, *Urlaub vom Staat: Tourismus in der DDR* (Cologne, Weimar, Vienna: Böhlau, 2012). Underneath the façade of ideological unity, moreover, communist societies witnessed the emergence of informal social subsystems like exchange markets or systems of patronage. Annette Schuhmann, ed., *Vernetzte Improvisationen: Gesellschaftliche Subsysteme in Ostmitteleuropa und in der DDR* (Cologne, Weimar, Vienna: Böhlau, 2008).

began to leave the boundaries set by the party state and did so publicly and deliberately, they challenged a core tenet of the communist systems' mode of operation. Thus, the communist authorities reacted with forms of repression that were disproportionate to the real threat posed by social dissent. The GDR is a case in point: not everyone will agree with Martin Sabrow's characterization of the GDR as a 'consensus dictatorship' (*Konsensdiktatur*).[16] But it is uncontroversial that in East Germany dissent did not become a wider social phenomenon until the mid-1980s and that, even then, these forms remained confined to groups of social outcasts. And yet, the East German leadership cast one of the tightest nets of surveillance over its society. In a country as vast as the Soviet Union, the dissidents were a comparatively small group; nevertheless, the Soviet leadership cracked down on them relentlessly.[17]

Poland may have been more tolerant than other eastern European countries. Yet the Polish leadership, too, could accept the 1960s revisionism of someone like Leszek Kołakowski only up to a certain point; in 1968, resorting to anti-Semitism, it purged the revisionists from its ranks.[18] Recent research suggests that the relative freedom opposition groups enjoyed in the late 1970s and again in the late 1980s was due as much to international pressure as to the Polish leadership's liberalism.[19] Even as the opposition was allowed to exist, it remained an anomaly within the Polish People's Republic: until the end of 1988, the Polish leadership ignored rather than tolerated the opposition by trying to pretend that, at best, its members were ordinary citizens and, at worst, ordinary criminals.[20]

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[16] Martin Sabrow, 'Der Konkurs der Konsensdiktatur: Überlegungen zum inneren Zerfall der DDR aus kulturgeschichtlicher Perspektive', in Konrad H. Jarausch and Martin Sabrow, eds., *Weg in den Untergang: Der innere Zerfall der DDR* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999), 83-116.

[17] Viktor Voronkov and Jan Wielgohs, 'Soviet Russia', in Detlef Pollack and Jan Wielgohs, eds., *Dissent and Opposition in Communist Eastern Europe* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 95-118. According to Dmitry Furman, there were 1,000 KGB employees for every dissident. Quoted in Archie Brown, 'Perestroika and the End of the Cold War', *Cold War History* 7, 2 (2007), 1-17, at 2.

[18] Jerzy Eisler, *Polski rok 1968* (Warszawa: IPN, 2006); Andrzej Friszke, *Anatomia buntu: Kuroń, Modzelewski i komandosi* (Kraków: Znak, 2010).

[19] On the late 1970s see Wanda Jarząbek's article below. On the late 1980s see Andrzej Paczkowski, 'Boisko wielkich mocarstw: Polska 1980-1989. Widok od wewnątrz', *Polski Przegląd Dyplomatyczny* 2, 3 (2002), 165-210.

[20] In November 1982, for instance, the leadership of the Polish communist party tried to impress upon Lech Wałęsa that he had ceased to be an opposition leader and now simply was 'citizen Wałęsa'. Antoni Dudek, *Reglementowana rewolucja: Rozpad dyktatury komunistycznej w Polsce 1988–1990* (Warszawa: Arcana, 2004), 57.

The party states of eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, in sum, could accommodate and were characterized by complex social dynamics and different forms of resistance; but there was something they could not tolerate: the public and deliberate manifestation of political disagreement, that is, of *dissent* or *dissidence*.[21] Whatever simplifications came to be associated with the term 'dissent' and however much many dissidents themselves rejected the label, then, it actually is a very appropriate term for the political practises that are the subject of this book. Following Detlef Pollack and Jan Wielgohs, 'dissent' or 'dissidence' are thus defined on the basis of 'the position of [the dissidents'] discourses within the system of social communication' in communist societies. The terms 'dissent' or 'dissidence' describe 'all discourses and activities that were critical of the regime and that constituted, or wished to constitute, an autonomous sphere of public, political and cultural communication outside of the official institutions of the party state and which in so doing openly denied the claim of the regime to full control of public life.'[22]

In this understanding, 'dissent' does not describe a specific ideological orientation. The members of the *Praxis* school, which *Nenad Stefanov* describes below, sought to broaden the sphere of autonomous communication in Yugoslavia while remaining within the communist system's own ideology. A group of social scientists, the *Praxis* scholars had started out within the official structures of the Yugoslav state. Many of them had fought in the communist resistance movement during the second world war and, having begun their careers before the Yugoslav-Soviet split, some had even studied in the Soviet Union. Throughout their lives they remained committed to the project of building a socialist society. Their neo-Marxist critique of Yugoslav realities, however, and their own intellectual 'praxis' of engaging various philosophical orientations in an open and critical dialogue put them at odds with the Yugoslav authorities. Metaphorically speaking, they started out as reformers of their 'church', but in the end found themselves being branded 'apostates' – the original meaning of 'dissident' – and ultimately were pushed outside the official framework of Yugoslav society.

The fate of the *Praxis* group was paradigmatic for many, though by far not all, of the dissidents. Following de-Stalinization, some eastern Euro-

[21] See the definition of 'dissent' and 'dissidence' in the online edition of *Merriam-Webster*: www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/dissent and www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/dissidence (accessed May 2013). See also Falk, 'Resistance and Dissent', 321.

[22] Detlef Pollack and Jan Wielgohs, 'Introduction', in Pollack and Wielgohs, eds., *Dissent and Opposition*, ix-xvii, at xiii.

pean countries – most notably Hungary and Poland – witnessed the rise of 'revisionism' – an intellectual current trying to bring the socialist project back to its roots. When many revisionists were expelled from their parties, they adopted more fundamental forms of dissent. The defining moment of this time was the crushing of the Prague Spring; *Tomáš Vilímek* vividly depicts its impact on the future GDR opposition. He also shows, though, that the process of abandoning socialism as a viable framework for dissent was a much more drawn out process than is often assumed. Among many future GDR dissidents, the experience of 1968 needed quite some time 'to sink in'. 1968 – important though it was – was not the 'big bang' of dissent.

In many ways, the experience of the East German peace activists, which *Holger Nehring* recaptures, was similar to that of the revisionists. The East German peace activists, Nehring shows, should not be retrospectively branded as civil rights activists. Their initial focus was on peace and disarmament and they worked within a niche the regime accepted: the Protestant churches; they even used a slogan the Soviet Union had introduced into the international discourse on peace: 'swords into ploughshares'.[23] Quickly, however, they grew critical of the East German regime's policies of militarizing society. Given how narrow the space of 'what counted as legitimate politics' was drawn in the GDR, Nehring argues, 'demonstrating for peace itself was automatically a claim for fundamental civil rights'. If carefully defined, then, 'dissent' remains a useful term. How can it analytically be combined with the notion 'transnational'?

Transnational Perspectives on Dissent in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Bloc: Mutual Perceptions, Interactions and Cooperation

Historians and social scientists operate with a range of different definitions of the term 'transnational'. Tellingly, the entry 'transnational' in Akira Iriye and Pierre-Yves Saunier's dictionary of transnational history does not provide a definition of the term, but an overview over its emergence and different uses.[24] Something most authors agree upon is that the interest in

[23] The slogan is engraved on a sculpture the Soviet Union had donated for the garden of the UN building in New York City. Independent peace movement activists in the GDR wore the slogan and a picture of the sculpture – depicting a man forging a sword into a ploughshare – on badges.

[24] Pierre-Yves Saunier, 'Transnational', in Akira Iriye and Pierre-Yves Saunier, eds., *The Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History: From the mid-19th Century to the Present* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 1045-1055.

transnational history emerged in response to the contemporary concern with 'globalisation' and the awareness it created for how nation-states are embedded in, shot-through with, and at times even constituted by larger structures, contacts, exchanges, discourses, etc., that is, by phenomena which cut across or permeate at least two nation-states and are thus transnational.[25] In its broadest sense, transnational history is concerned with the emergence, evolution and impact of these phenomena. It therefore makes sense to distinguish it from diplomatic or international history. Where the latter are concerned with the interaction of nation-states within a wider system of international relations, the former is concerned with goods, people, ideas – say, capital flows, migrants, Marxism – that moved 'above, below, through, and around, as well as within, the nation-state'.[26] The borders between the two approaches, however, are permeable and – as Kiran-Klaus Patel has noted – one and the same phenomenon can be object of both inter- and transnational approaches: the United Nations or the European Union are creations of diplomatic processes and they remain major forums for the international interaction of nation-states; with their provisions to regulate or foster economic exchange or their provisions to counter climate change, fight corruption, or safeguard human rights, however, they may trigger transnational forces.[27]

How can the history of 'dissent' benefit from a transnational approach? If transnational history is concerned with cross-border connections and flows of information, ideas, people, or goods, how did such processes concern someone like Havel's allegorical greengrocer? Is not a 'transnational history of dissent' really an oxymoron? Here, an additional aspect of 'dissent' comes into play: many of the forms of dissent described in this book shared a specific, somewhat paradoxical form in which they tried to extend the sphere of free public communication. Almost all dissidents merely demanded rights or liberties which their governments claimed to grant them anyway; stepping outside the system's boundaries, the dissidents pretended to remain within its framework. The early Soviet dissidents analysed by *Julia Metger* pioneered this approach. The Soviet constitution did feature civil rights and Moscow had signed the 1966 UN human rights pacts (and later signed the Helsinki agreement of 1975). Protesting against the political trials of the late 1960s, the dissidents did not need to question Soviet communism, but could instead invoke the Soviet constitution and

[25] David Thelen, 'The Nation and Beyond: Transnational Perspectives on United States History', *The Journal of American History* 86, 3 (1999), 965-975, at 966.

[26] Ibid., 967.

[27] Kiran Klaus Patel, 'Überlegungen zu einer transnationalen Geschichte', *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 52 (2004), 626-645, at 634.

later the country's international obligations under the Helsinki agreement.[28] Charta 77, discussed in this book by *Tomáš Vilímek*, applied a similar form of activism to Czechoslovak realities. The Polish opposition – whose activities *Wanda Jarząbek* describe – constituted itself around the defence of workers' rights and thus around an integral part of communist ideology. By centring their activism on 'peace' the opposition groups of the late 1980s in Poland, Hungary and the GDR – discussed by *Padraic Kenney*, *Kacper Szulecki*, or *Holger Nehring* – tried to give a new, transformative meaning to a central word of the official lexicon.

These similarities could be explained by reference to the similarities of the communist systems. This was how Havel saw it: invoking the *Communist Manifesto* with 'subversive irony'[29], he characterized dissent as 'a natural and inevitable consequence of the present historical phase of the system it is haunting.'[30] But do the similarities of the 'system of social communication' in communist societies suffice to explain a phenomenon like dissent? Showing how in specific political systems all attempts to broaden the sphere of free discourse are turned into 'apostasy' is one thing; to ask *how* people tried to broaden spaces of free communication is something very different. 'Societies,' *Padraic Kenney* writes below, 'are not chemical compositions, giving rise to similar phenomena under similar conditions; nor are they elements in a demonstration of a domino effect. Historians need to ask themselves, yet rarely do so: how and why are phenomena similar to one another?'[31]

In his contribution, Kenney answers this question by recapturing how he encountered similarities in the style and tactics of Polish and Hungarian opposition groups of the late 1980s. The Hungarian groups, he found, had been created according to a Polish model: in the early 1980s, two Hungarian political scientists began travelling to Poland. Later taking their students along, they wanted to get in touch with and learn from the Polish opposition. Bringing the political ideas and tactics they encountered in Poland back to Hungary, they helped shape an opposition movement surprisingly similar to the Polish one. 'This is transnational history at its purest,'

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[28] Sarah B. Snyder, *Human Rights Activism and the End of the Cold War: A Transnational History of the Helsinki Network* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Christian Peterson, *Globalizing Human Rights: Private Citizens, the Soviet Union, and the West* (New York: Routledge, 2011).

[29] Bolton, *Worlds of Dissent*, 1.

[30] Havel, 'Power of the Powerless', 23.

[31] For an elaboration of this position see Padraic Kenney and Gerd-Rainer Horn, 'Introduction: Approaches to the Transnational', in Padraic Kenney and Gerd-Rainer Horn, eds., *Transnational Moments of Change: Europe 1945 - 1968 - 1989* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2004), ix-xix.

Kenney concludes. '… young men from one country entering an apartment in another country, finding people who are like them in age and background but who act very differently. We see them learning how to act in this new way and then taking that mode of action home with them.'

A closer reading of Havel's text suggests that Kenney did not describe a singular case: throughout his text, Havel described 'dissent' as a movement whose members (in different parts of the Soviet bloc) were imbued with a spirit of mutual solidarity; indeed, 'The Power of the Powerless' was a product of that spirit. It was written as an introduction to a Polish-Czechoslovak collection of essays on civil rights activism in which writers from both countries were supposed to respond to and elaborate upon the ideas developed by Havel.[32] While this book never materialized, other forms of cooperation did take place: contact was established via telegrams, letters, or phone calls; intellectuals published essays or interviews in each other's samizdat journals or featured in the editorial boards of each other's periodicals; appeals of solidarity were adopted in support of each other. In the summer and autumn of 1978, meetings among Polish, Czech and Slovak intellectuals took place in the Karkonosze/Krkonoše Mountains, at the Polish-Czechoslovak border. An appeal adopted after the meetings was broadcast to east central Europe via Radio Free Europe and contained the demand to free all political prisoners in the Soviet bloc. Moreover, interaction was not restricted to Polish-Czechoslovak encounters. The Poles, and certainly also the Czech and Slovak dissidents, had drawn inspiration for their activity from the Soviet human rights groups. In 1979, one Polish activist, Zbigniew Romaszewski, managed to travel to Moscow to meet Andrei Sakharov – an encounter that inspired Romaszewski to follow the Soviet example and add a Polish commission to the emergent transnational network monitoring compliance with the human rights provisions of the 1975 Helsinki agreement.[33]

Until recently, Kenney's *A Carnival of Revolution* or Barbara Falk's *Dilemmas of Dissidence* were the only studies that made these cross-border interactions between different opposition groups a central part of the story of dissent.[34] The publication of Friederike Kind-Kovács and Jessie Labov's

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[32] John Keane, *Václav Havel: A Political Tragedy in Six Acts* (London: Bloomsbury, 1999), 268.

[33] Jan Józef Lipski, *KOR: A History of the Workers' Defense Committee in Poland, 1976–1981* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 279-285; Andrzej Friszke, *Opozycja polityczna w PRL 1945–1980* (London: 'Aneks', 1994), 298-299; on the Helsinki network see Snyder, *Human Rights Activism*.

[34] Padraic Kenney, *A Carnival of Revolution: Central Europe 1989* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002); Barbara J. Falk, *The Dilemmas of Dissidence in East-Central Europe: Citizen Intellectuals and Philosopher Kings* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2003). In

edited volume on samizdat and tamizdat as transnational media, however, is evidence of a growing recognition among historians that transnational interactions are crucial to understand movements of dissent in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.[35] Contributing to this trend is one of the main aims of this book.

Tomáš Vilímek's article – based on extensive archival research and oral history – provides ample evidence for how the rise of dissent was shaped by mutual perceptions, interactions and exchanges of ideas. As noted above, the Prague Spring was a watershed for the emergence of dissent, but its impact seems to have been less immediate than is often assumed. Among future East German dissidents, the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia initiated reflections that lasted for years and, crucially, these reflections were influenced by encounters with people and texts from the ČSSR. For example, Wolfgang Templin had initially considered the Soviet invasion legitimate, and it was only after conversations with two Slovak girls and his later readings of Polish and Czechoslovak samizdat and émigré publications that he began to rethink his position. Ludwig Mehlhorn, too, began to reflect upon the Prague Spring only in response to the emergence of opposition groups in Poland and Czechoslovakia.

The East German activists whom Vilímek interviewed readily admitted that the specific form the GDR dissent assumed in the 1980s – its non-ideological character, its defensiveness, its non-clandestine, public charac-

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contrast, the otherwise highly useful essays in Pollack and Wielgohs, eds., *Dissent and Opposition* write the history of dissent as one of parallel national histories with little or no interaction between them.

[35] Friederike Kind-Kovács and Jessie Labov, eds., *Samizdat, Tamizdat, and Beyond: Transnational Media during and after Socialism* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2013). See also the contributions to Hans-Joachim Veen, Ulrich Mählert and Peter März, eds., *Wechselwirkungen Ost-West: Dissidenz, Opposition und Zivilgesellschaft 1975-1989* (Köln: Böhlau, 2007). Much of this research is published in individual articles. See, for instance, Natalie Bégin, 'Kontakte zwischen Gewerkschaften in Ost und West: Die Auswirkungen von Solidarność in Deutschland und Frankreich: Ein Vergleich', *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 45 (2005), 293-324; Jan C. Behrends and Friederike Kind, 'Vom Untergrund in den Westen: Samizdat, Tamizdat und die Neuerfindung Mitteleuropas in den Achtzigerjahren', *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 45 (2005), 427-448; Robert Horvath, '"The Solzhenitsyn Effect": East European Dissidents and the Demise of the Revolutionary Privilege', *Human Rights Quarterly* 29 (2007), 879-907; Robert Brier, 'Adam Michnik's Understanding of Totalitarianism and the West European Left: A Historical and Transnational Approach to Dissident Political Thought', *East European Politics & Societies* 25, 2 (2011), 197-218; Christie Miedema, 'The Transnationality of Dutch Solidarity with the Polish Opposition 1980-1989', *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire / Belgisch Tijdschrift voor Filologie en Geschiedenis* 89 (2011), 1307-1330; Kacper Szulecki, 'Hijacked Ideas: Human Rights, Peace, and Environmentalism in Czechoslovak and Polish Dissident Discourses', *East European Politics & Societies* 25, 2 (2011), 272-295.

ter – was heavily influenced by the models from the Soviet Union and east central Europe. The case of the East German opposition confirms observations Kenney makes on how similar national contexts and geographical proximity foster transnational exchanges. Searching for political models, the most obvious thing for the East Germans to do was to look to their neighbours within the Soviet bloc. The ability to travel in eastern Europe or even spend a longer period in one of them – such as when Templin studied in Poland – greatly fostered this circulation of ideas and tactics. However, direct encounters, which the secret police of the relevant countries tried to restrict, were not the only routes along which ideas travelled between different countries: Vilímek mentions how émigré journals or couriers, like the theology student from Leipzig who provided Mehlhorn with texts from Charter 77, also helped to sustain a certain flow of information. The East Germans had as well another very important source of information: West German media.[36]

What Vilímek's text also documents is how a sense of transnational solidarity and of being involved in a common struggle emerged among the dissident groups. For many Charter 77 members, the writings of Robert Havemann or Rudolf Bahro remained too concerned with reforming socialism. Nevertheless, it seems to have been natural for the Polish, Czech and Slovak activists meeting in 1978 to include Bahro into their appeal to free all political prisoners in the east bloc. And even as Jaroslav Šabata conceded that Havemann's writings were irrelevant for him, he still insisted that they belonged in a transnational 'library of dissent'. Even Miloš Rejchrt, someone who denied that events in other countries influenced him, acknowledged his 'dissident's obligation' to read the texts of other opposition intellectuals.

In terms of the history of dissent, therefore, transnational history shows that the striking similarities between the respective dissident movements were not merely the 'natural and inevitable consequence of the present historical phase of the system'. Mutual perceptions, the circulation of ideas and the movement of people across borders brought about similar forms of political opposition in different countries. To be sure, one should not exaggerate the degree to which the joint experience of dissent created a transnational community. The projected Polish-Czechoslovak volume failed because the regime in Prague began to crack-down on its dissident movement.[37] Dissent, moreover, remained focused on domestic concerns and

[36] On how ideas and information circulated among Soviet bloc opposition groups see also Padraic Kenney, 'Opposition Networks and Transnational Diffusion in the Revolutions of 1989', in Kenney and Horn, eds., *Transnational Moments of Change*, 207-225.

[37] Keane, *Václav Havel*, 268.

was heavily rooted in national cultures.[38] For many, 'living within truth' meant to wrest national languages from the distortions of official propaganda and give words their 'authentic' meaning back; it meant exposing suppressed or falsified aspects of national history – at times replacing them with idealized views of the interwar period. Striving for human rights and democracy, moreover, was indistinguishable from the quest for national sovereignty.[39] The international imagery of the dissidents, therefore, had much in common with Giuseppe Mazzini's nineteenth century liberal nationalist vision. Again, however, this nationalist vision was something the dissidents shared and, with the debate about 'Central Europe', they even developed a transnational cultural context for their national discourses.[40] These discursive entanglements are a striking example of how national and transnational factors interact.[41]

But can transnational perspectives accomplish more than just explaining the similarities between movements of resistance in different countries of the Soviet bloc? For some authors, the end of the cold war was part of a broader political transformation of the world which turned representative democracy and respect for individual freedoms into 'the organizing principles of a new international order'.[42] Political scientist Samuel P. Huntington believed that the transitions from communism were part of a worldwide wave of democratization that had begun with the south European transitions of the 1970s and continued well after 1989.[43] If transnational history can explain the emergence of dissent without having to resort to ahistorical concepts like a *Zeitgeist* or a social domino effect, maybe it can explain these events as well?[44]

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[38] Jerzy Szacki, *Liberalism after Communism* (Budapest, New York: Central European University Press, 1995), 85; see also Michal Kopeček, 'Human Rights Facing a National Past: Dissident 'Civic Patriotism' and the Return of History in East Central Europe, 1968 –1989', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 38, 4 (2012), 573-602; Elżbieta Ciżewska, *Filozofia publiczna Solidarności: Solidarność 1980–1981 z perspektywy republikańskiej tradycji politycznej* (Warszawa: Narodowe Centrum Kultury, 2010); Sergiusz Kowalski, *Krytyka solidarnościowego rozumu: Studium z socjologii myślenia potocznego* (Warszawa: PEN, 1990).

[39] See, for instance, Jacek Kuroń, *Polityka i odpowiedzialność*, 53-57.

[40] Behrends and Kind, 'Vom Untergrund in den Westen'.

[41] Patel, 'Überlegungen', 632-633.

[42] Nicolas Guilhot, *The Democracy Makers: Human Rights & International Order* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 1.

[43] Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman, London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991).

[44] Robert Brier, 'Historicizing 1989: Transnational Culture and the Political Transformation of East-Central Europe', *European Journal of Social Theory* 12, 3 (2009), 337-357.

There are at least two good reasons to be cautious. Firstly, the question as to what role the dissidents did play in ending the cold war (and thus in Huntington's 'wave of democracy') still awaits a conclusive answer. Multiple explanations have been put forth for why communism fell and the dissidents feature in only some of them.[45] Until very late in the 1980s, moreover, dissent looked like a noble, but ultimately futile attempt to defy the ironclad realities of the cold war. Even Havel conceded in 'The Power of the Powerless' how the 'stalemated world of nuclear parity' endowed 'the system with an unprecedented degree of external stability'.[46] In 1983, five years after Havel had written his famous essay, the story of dissent seemed to have ended in tragedy: the world had descended into a 'second cold war'. Solidarity in Poland had been crushed and the most prominent Czech and Slovak activists were incarcerated; the Moscow Helsinki group had self-dissolved and most of its members had been put into prison, deported to labour camps or forced into exile.

Understanding the sense of defiance in the face of an international situation which was expected to change at no more than glacial speed (if at all), means to understand a core element of what Jonathan Bolton calls the 'worlds of dissent'. If we ignore this experience in favour of an 'end-of-the-cold-war-trajectory' we are in danger of adopting a teleological perspective. The experience of 'dissent' can be illuminating in its own right and on its own terms.

The second reason can be found in Kenney's contribution to this volume: there seems to have been little interaction among the revolutions of 1989 and other late-twentieth and early twenty-first century revolts. For all the interest the protesting Chinese students in 1989 had in the writings of the dissidents and in Gorbachev's reforms, Kenney writes, the 'Tiananmen occupation was not an eastern European event that ended tragically, but rather an entirely different animal with its own logic.' South African activ-

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[45] The controversy between Timothy Garton Ash and Stephen Kotkin may not have been overly useful in clarifying this matter, but it does bring out the gulf separating the opinion of serious historians on this problem. Stephen Kotkin, *Uncivil Society: 1989 and the Implosion of the Communist Establishment* (New York: Modern Library, 2009); Timothy Garton Ash, '1989!', *The New York Review of Books*, 5 Nov 2009, available www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2009/nov/05/1989/?pagination=false (accessed August 2013). Especially experts in Soviet history voice doubts whether the dissidents played any significant role in the 'Gorbachev revolution'. See Archie Brown, *Seven Years that Changed the World: Perestroika in Perspective* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), esp. 157-190; Vladislav M. Zubok, *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007). For a sketch of what a multi-causal explanation might look like see Christoph Boyer, '"1989" und die Wege dorthin', *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 59, 1 (2011), 101-118.

[46] Havel, 'Power of the Powerless', 24.

ists, too, may have been aware of events in eastern Europe and adopted the Polish Round Table model, but 'at the heart of the transformation the African context mattered most to the exclusion of any other'. Reflecting on what some observers called the 'Twitter revolution' in Moldavia, Kenney also warns that our contemporary fascination with the internet or social networks like Facebook should not lead us to believe that such media are the actual cause of revolt and protest.

In order to avoid the recent fascination with transnational connections and networks, Kenney distinguishes between two kinds of phenomena that may cause similarity and simultaneity in political revolts. For the first he uses the metaphor of 'electromagnetic forces': the members of the opposition in the Soviet bloc, he argues, can be compared to 'atoms in a molecule, bound together and exchanging information over short distances' – 'transnational interactions are like the electromagnetic forces binding them closer together'. Understanding transnational political activism in this way Kenney sees it restricted to 'periods of heightened political activity', occurring 'over short distances among people who share common interests and skills'. Most of the time when we encounter simultaneity and similarity in political revolutions, however, we are looking not at 'electromagnetic forces', but 'radio waves': forces that 'exist in the background, as a constant presence' rather than as a result of direct interaction. To explain the striking simultaneity of late twentieth-century democratic transitions in different parts of the world, he mentions four such background factors: a generational turnover, the availability of new means of communication, a global human rights discourse and the waning of the cold war.

If the history of dissent cannot easily be integrated into a global 'wave of democracy', is it thus only a concern for specialists in Russian and East European studies? Discussing the remaining contributions to this book I will argue that it is not and I will use Kenney's metaphor of 'radio waves' to make this point. Firstly, these 'radio waves' certainly can be characterised as transnational phenomena: they occurred above or below the level of nation-states but had an important impact on processes within nation-states. Secondly, unless we invoke *Zeitgeists* or 'dominoes', these radio waves are puzzling phenomena in their own right. Take the example of human rights: activists in Chile, South Africa or Poland adopted a human rights discourse for reasons that were domestic and had little in common with one another. 'Human rights', moreover, probably meant something different in all these three countries. Yet precisely because of these differences it is striking that in all three countries people would frame their protest as a defence of individual rights and not, say, as the struggle for world revolution. The fact, moreover, that the term 'human rights' took on particular meanings in particular contexts is a central insight of the transnational history of human

rights: the power of the human rights discourse, after all, derived from how it provided a meaningful framework for vastly different forms of protest occurring in vastly different places.[47] Studying how people around the world adopted 'rights talk' is key to understanding how human rights became a global language of moral protest – a 'radio wave' – in the first place. Even if dissent was not part of a 'global dance of democracy', as Kenney observes below, by focussing on the 'radio waves' of transnational history, we may come to understand it as part of broader, even worldwide processes nonetheless.

Dissent and the Transnational History of the 1970s and 1980s

The 'Power of the Powerless' had more than one transnational dimension. As noted above, Havel did not like the terms 'dissent' and 'dissident'. He considered them labels western journalists had applied to him and his peers; the 'spectre' he invoked was 'what *in the West* is called "dissent"'.[48] Apparently, however, the Czech intellectual believed that he could not do without this western label, for, rather than discarding it, he tried to explain what the people called 'dissidents' actually did. So, in addition to Havel's Czech, Slovak and Polish peers, 'The Power of the Powerless' had a second audience: people in the west.

There are two reasons why western audiences were important for the dissidents. Firstly, there was the need to create publicity.[49] Without publicity, the kind of activity by Havel's greengrocer would have remained an individual act of defiance. It was only once a wider public was made aware of the possibility to perforate the regime's façade of public rituals that such acts acquired political relevance. Therefore, the 'most important trait of dissidence', Pollack and Wielgohs note, was to create an independent *public* sphere; they hence see samizdat as 'the systematic "site" of dissidence'.[50]

Crucial though it was, samizdat was but one form of breaking the regime's monopoly over the public sphere. Another form was crucially dependent on western attention to events in eastern Europe. Almost anything of political relevance that was published in western media or by western news agencies about eastern Europe returned to eastern Europe.

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[47] Kenneth Cmiel, 'The Emergence of Human Rights Politics in the United States', *The Journal of American History* 86, 3 (1999), 1231-1250.

[48] Havel, 'Power of the Powerless', 23.

[49] Falk, 'Resistance and Dissent', 321.

[50] Pollack and Wielgohs, 'Introduction', xiii.

Reports were translated and published in émigré publications or reached the Soviet bloc on the radio waves of western broadcasters like Radio Free Europe or the foreign language programmes of the BBC.[51] Publications in western media – news reports by foreign correspondents, political essays published in periodicals or interviews in newspapers, radio or TV news programmes – were thus a very effective way in which the dissidents could communicate with their own societies.

Radio Free Europe, for instance, played a crucial role in disseminating information about the strikes at the Polish Baltic coast of 1980. The Polish authorities tried to suppress any information about the strikes in order to prevent them from spreading to other cities. The intellectual Jacek Kuroń, however, informed western correspondents about the labour unrest and their reporting reached Poland via western radio stations.[52] Like someone throwing a boomerang, then, many dissidents cast their statements out into the west in order to hit targets in eastern Europe.

Secondly, western audiences themselves were a crucial target of appeals by eastern dissidents. Although it does not contain the term, 'The Power of the Powerless' is often seen as a key text of 'anti-politics'.[53] The dissidents' programme, Havel wrote, was essentially 'defensive' – it sought to protect individuals against the 'total assault on humans' which the post-totalitarian system mounted. Thus, this programme offered 'no new conception, model, or ideology, and therefore it [was] not politics in the proper sense of the word …'. Usually, this programme took 'the form of a defence of human rights'. Against the regimes' empty rituals, the dissidents did not counterpose an elaborate political programme or a vision of a future society, but the simple idea that everyone, everywhere is entitled to protection from repression.[54]

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[51] The Polish émigré journal *Kultura*, for instance, regularly featured sections on western reporting about Poland. A systematic account of the impact western broadcasters such as Radio Free Europe-Radio Liberty, the international sections of the BBC, Radio France Internationale, or Deutsche Welle had on the Soviet bloc remains to be written. For an annotated collection of documents on Radio Free Europe see A. Ross Johnson and R. Eugene Parta, *Cold War Broadcasting: Impact on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe – A Collection of Studies and Documents* (Budapest; New York: CEU Press, 2010).

[52] Jacek Kuroń, *Autobiografia* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Krytyki Politycznej, 2011), 512.

[53] The term was introduced in György Konrád, *Antipolitics: An Essay* (San Diego: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1984).

[54] For a provocative, recent account of the history of human rights ascribing Havel's essay a central role see Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010).

The idea of human rights draws heavily on the imagery of a 'court of world opinion' – a place where victims of repression could accuse their perpetrators and spur the international community to punish this violation of their common humanity. In order to appeal to these 'international courts', however, the dissidents had to make their suffering known to international audiences. International audiences were thus not only 'feedback loops' to reach eastern European societies, they were important addressees themselves. In explaining to a western audience who the dissidents were and what they were doing, Havel did not merely seek to satisfy a western curiosity; he engaged in political activism.[55]

Unless we operate with a very simple sender-receiver-model of how information is passed on or how ideas circulate, the relationship between the dissidents and their western audiences comes into focus as a central dimension of dissent. One important questions is which intermediaries helped the dissidents to reach their international audiences. Eastern European émigré and diaspora communities in the west doubtlessly played an important role in this respect. Émigré journals – the so-called tamizdat – were crucial outlets for independent political thought, the staff at Radio Free Europe consisted largely of political exiles from eastern Europe and émigrés established contacts between opposition groups behind the iron curtain and supporters in the west. The cultural and social milieux of the émigré groups, their lines of communication with their home countries and the politics they were entangled in all shaped their role as a 'feedback loop' for the circulation of ideas within the Soviet bloc and between east and west.

In her contribution to this volume, *Julia Metger* analyses another important group of intermediaries. She recaptures how a relationship between dissidents and western correspondents evolved in late 1960s Moscow. Her focus is on how three newspapers – the *New York Times*, the *Times* of London, and the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* – reported from three political trials held in Moscow between 1966 and 1972.[56] A number of developments intersected in the Soviet capital, she shows, turning it into a transnational 'space of experience' where Soviet dissidents could become western household names.

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[55] In retrospect, Adam Michnik, even argued that it was only international attention that turned individual defiance into political activism. Adam Michnik, 'Polska na pierwszej stronie', *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 30 Sep. 2002; cf. Brier, 'Adam'.

[56] Barbara Walker, 'Moscow Human Rights Defenders Look West: Attitudes toward U.S. Journalists in the 1960s and 1970s', in György Péteri, ed., *Imagining the West in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union* (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2010), 237-257.

As the capital of the Soviet superpower, Moscow was always interesting for western readers. In the 1960s, however, this attention changed as détente created an awareness in the west of differences within Soviet society. Western journalism was also undergoing changes. Especially the *New York Times* encouraged its correspondents to learn Russian and socialize with the educated circles of Moscow in order to switch from 'traditional facts-and-politics journalism' to a more vivid reporting based on in-depth research. Reconstructing these processes, Metger charts an evolution of the western reporting from a dry facts-based approach to a lively style that barely concealed the journalists' sympathies with the dissidents. The correspondents' language of civil rights and legality, moreover, made the Soviet process accessible to western audiences. By 1972, at the latest, the dissidents had come to understand western correspondents as crucial allies. Thus, they flooded them, as a Briton quoted by Metger complains, with protest materials.

Metger's article is so important because she makes 'the contingency of information on dissent and opposition … part of the story' of dissent. Rather than understanding the 'dissidents' as an objective social category and taking their relevance for granted, she highlights how they emerged as an internationally relevant group from interactions between events in Moscow, the reporting on them, and wider, transnational processes – radio waves – such as détente or changes in the style of western newspaper reports. Yet Metger's article also raises a simple, yet crucial question: Why did people in the west pay attention to the dissidents? Why would the fate of a few writers put on trial in Moscow be of concern for newspaper readers in Frankfurt, London or New York? Why would some of them identify with the fate of these Soviet writers and become politically active on their behalf?

Through the prism of the events of 1989 and the role generally ascribed to dissidents in this process, the attention paid to the dissidents may seem only natural. Here, too, however, it is important to avoid an 'end of the cold war'-teleology. In the late 1960s, even more so than in the early 1980s, the dissident's rebellion against the Soviet system – and the cold war stabilizing it – looked to many observers like an act of misguided heroism. The emergence of the dissidents, moreover, undercut many underlying assumptions about the cold war. On one hand, the figure of the 'dissident' confirmed traditional views of life in a communist society which, as Metger shows, had become problematic in the age of détente. As lonely intellectual figures defying the totalitarian leviathan, the dissidents resembled the characters from Arthur Koestler's *Darkness at Noon* or, more importantly, from *Nineteen-Eighty Four*, George Orwell's powerful

vision of a totalitarian society.[57] On the other hand, however, the dissidents were not content with their role as witnesses of communist repression: they called upon the international community to help them. Invoking human rights, moreover, they did not take sides in the cold war but appealed to a universal anti-political morality instead. Thus, they contradicted the scenarios of a conflict in which, imagined as a gargantuan struggle between two opposed systems, individuals or moral impartiality had no role to play. A core idea of the 'Power of the Powerless' or Adam Michnik's 'New Evolutionism', moreover, was that even totalitarian systems could slowly be changed by social activism. Thus they contradicted the views of western political analysts who believed that totalitarian societies were incapable of changing or, if at all, could only be changed from above. In 'tilting at the windmills' of the cold war, therefore, the dissidents challenged many of the taken-for-granted notions of western policies.

By asking why western audiences paid attention to the dissidents' appeals, we are also touching upon a more general problem of transnational political activism. The 1970s are increasingly seen as a decade in which a human rights discourse experienced its international breakthrough.[58] In spite of a soaring activism in the name of human rights, however, some of the worst atrocities of this decade – the Cambodian genocide, for instance, or the massacres which Indonesian troops committed in East-Timor – went, as Jan Eckel or Bradley Simpson demonstrate, largely unnoticed.[59] Why, then, did some human rights campaigns capture the international imagination while others were ignored? Apparently, the answer lies not only with these campaigns themselves but also with how their message resonated with the expectations, values and ideas of their western audiences. A transnational approach to the history of dissent is therefore important not merely because it shows how dissidents were interacting with each other. Transnational perspectives also integrate studies of dissent into the broader history of the human rights revolution and of the intellectual and cultural changes propelling it. The 'radio waves', in other words, are highly relevant fields of study in and of themselves and showing how the dissent 'rode' these waves we learn something important about them.

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[57] Bolton, *Worlds of Dissent*, 20.

[58] Jan Eckel and Samuel Moyn, eds., *Moral für die Welt? Menschenrechtspolitik in den 1970er Jahren* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012).

[59] Jan Eckel, '"Under the Magnifying Glass": The International Human Rights Campaign Against Chile in the Seventies', in Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann, ed., *Human Rights in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 321-342, at 326-327; Bradley R. Simpson, 'Denying the "First Right": The United States, Indonesia, and the Ranking of Human Rights by the Carter Administration, 1976-1980', *The International History Review* 31, 4 (2009), 798-826.

If we focus on the intellectual changes of the 1970s, rather than fixing our gaze on 1989, we encounter a discourse which remains under the radar of cold war history, but which focused significant chunks of western attention on eastern Europe: Marxism. The western left's relation to 'really existing socialism' is an extremely complex one. Suffice it to say that, by the late 1960s, few western leftists outside of the communist parties considered the Marxist-Leninist model to be anything else but authoritarian and repressive. Characterizing the intellectual world of the European left in the 1960s, however, Tony Judt wrote that 'when it came to changing the world there was still only one grand theory purporting to relate an interpretation of the world to an all-embracing project of change; only one Master Narrative offering to make sense of everything while leaving open a place for human initiative: the political project of Marxism itself.'[60] The continuing dominance of this system of thought rendered the existence of real-socialism problematic: as much as it contradicted core values of the western left, it nevertheless embodied an anti-capitalist modernity.[61] At least some of the attention which dissent created among western audiences was thus among people who were looking for processes that might signal an evolution of really existing socialism into a more democratic and humane direction.

Nenad Stefanov discusses a group which seemed to embody the most promising of these developments: the thinking of the *Praxis* school in Yugoslavia. Stefanov's is truly a story of the circulation of ideas across borders and the way they changed as they were adapted to new contexts. The *Praxis* group was named after an academic journal. Some of the philosophers and social scientists who edited the journal and published in it had studied in the west on scholarships by the Ford Foundation or the Alexander-von-Humboldt-Foundation. The ideas they encountered in the west – Marx' *Frühschriften*, the critical theory of the Frankfurt School, Herbert Marcuse's writings, but also analytical philosophy or American pragmatism – they took back to Yugoslavia where they integrated those ideas into a Marxist critique of the Yugoslav system. As these ideas evolved, western leftists projected their hopes for an alternative to capitalism that was both socialist and democratic on *Praxis*.

This east-west exchange of ideas was institutionalized in an international edition of the *Praxis* journal whose editorial board featured such intellectual giants of the western left as Jürgen Habermas, Herbert Marcuse, Lucien Goldmann or Zygmunt Bauman. An annual summer school held on the island of Korčula of the Croatian coast became a place where some of these

[60] Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945* (New York: Penguin, 2005), 403, 564-565.

[61] Eric Hobsbawm, 'Goodbye to All That', *Marxism Today*, 10 (1990), 18-23.

western intellectuals, including Habermas and Marcuse, met the *Praxis* philosophers as well as intellectuals from the Soviet bloc to discuss their ideas. While Marxism may rather be classified as a transnational 'radio wave', it seems that on Korčula it generated the 'electromagnetic forces' that bind people from different countries together, although, as Stefanov notes, linguistic barriers could hamper the exchange of ideas. In this transnational dimension, the members of the *Praxis* group and their international interlocutors dissented not only from the reigning orthodoxy in Yugoslavia, but also from the logic of the cold war.

Ultimately, the members of the *Praxis* group suffered the fate of all revisionist forces: they were pushed outside of the party state. However, this should not prevent us from analysing how Marxism or at least the ideal of 'democratic socialism' provided a western receptiveness for the emergence of dissent. In retrospect, the Eurocommunist attempt to align the Soviet model with a concern for human rights and democracy is easily dismissed as a sideshow to the political and social transformations taking place in the 1970s. As Soviet bloc dissent gained momentum, however, Eurocommunism was an important transnational 'sounding board' amplifying the appeals of the dissidents. In his memoirs, Jacek Kuroń noted that it was only once that he actually managed to get people out of prison: in 1976, when he published an open letter urging the Italian Communist Party boss Enrico Berlinguer to speak out against repression in Poland.[62] In that same year, a congress of all communist parties was held in East Berlin. Intended by its Soviet conveners to symbolize communist unity, the Italians were widely expected to use this forum to criticize their international comrades for failing to respect human rights. At the time, as Bolton notes, the Czechs Zdeněk Mlynář or Jiří Hájek – two of the main authors of Charter 77 – invested more hope in that conference than in the Helsinki process.[63] Initially, the group of Czechoslovak exiles organized around the journal *Listy* had also sought support from the Italian communists. Rejected, they turned to the socialists instead.[64]

Where Stefanov deals with intellectuals seeking an alternative to the western system, *Bent Boel* analyses the response of west European social democratic parties to the rise of dissent. He thus demonstrates how dissidence not only undercut traditional cold war thinking but the policies of détente as well. Boel provides a richly documented and nuanced view of the relationship between west European social democrats and east European dissidents. The latter's appeals exposed a central dilemma of détente – a

[62] Jacek Kuroń, *Gwiezdny czas* (London: Aneks, 1991), 9.

[63] Bolton, *Worlds of Dissent*, 26-27.

[64] See Bent Boel's contribution below.

foreign policy to which many western social democrats – most notably the West Germans – had made a major contribution: détente sought better relations between east and west to elevate the situation of people suffering under cold war realities. The very aim of sustaining less confrontational relations with the Soviet bloc, however, prevented many social democrats from speaking out on behalf of the dissidents.

Socialist responses to dissent, Boel shows, varied from party to party, from politician to politician and even with regards to the different opposition movements in Soviet bloc countries. On one hand, the Czechoslovak émigré group around the journal *Listy* and later Charter 77 enjoyed significant socialist backing; the overwhelming attitude toward Solidarity, on the other hand, was cautious and western socialists' contributions to sustaining the Solidarity underground were modest. The latter attitude can partly be explained by the volatile international situation of the Polish crisis and the collapse of superpower détente. After all, almost all western observers – including Jimmy Carter – responded cautiously to the developments in Poland. Undeniably, however, these different positions seem to be related to ideas underpinning détente. With almost half its members consisting of former reform communists, Charta 77 could still be interpreted as an outgrowth of the Prague Spring. Thus, it spoke to a central premise of *Ostpolitik*: the idea that change in the Soviet bloc could only be initiated from within the ruling parties. Charta 77, in other words, seemed like an internal opposition, even though this meant ignoring a text like Havel's 'Power of the Powerless'.[65] Poland's Solidarity, on the other hand, implemented more clearly the anti-political strategy of building parallel structures beyond the party state. Its rapid growth to nine million members, a quarter of Poland's total population and 80 % of the Polish work force, threatened to undermine communist rule and thus international stability. Boel's article also highlights an important lacuna: the attitude of other western parties which, it seems, were not significantly more active than the social democrats. For all their admiration of the dissidents, US neoconservatives believed that there was little they could do for them other than relentlessly putting pressure on the Soviet Union in the arms race.[66]

Wanda Jarząbek's article further makes an end-of-the-cold-war-trajectory in the history of dissent problematic. She analyses the Polish government's responses to the rise of an organized opposition in the context of the

[65] Willy Brandt, 'Wider die alten Kreuzritter: Über Bedingungen und Chancen einer künftigen Entspannungspolitik zwischen Ost und West', *Die Zeit*, 26 Aug. 1977.

[66] See, for instance, Charles Krauthammer, 'A Panglossian Warsaw', *The New Republic*, 10 Feb. 1982; Tom Kahn and Norman Podhoretz, 'How to Support Solidarnosc: A Debate', *Democratiya* 13 (2008), 230-261.

Helsinki process. Her article provides evidence for an often heard but as yet only thinly documented thesis: the human rights provisions of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) strengthened Soviet bloc opposition movements and empowered them to challenge communist rule.[67] The Polish government's tolerating the precursors to the Solidarity movement, she demonstrates, was to some extent due to external factors. Against the background of the CSCE follow-up meeting in Belgrade and with US President Carter turning human rights into a central notion of his policy, Warsaw believed that repression and political trials would jeopardize the financial credits the Poles hoped to receive from the west. Jarząbek also shows, however, that once the internal situation threatened to get out of control the authorities cracked down on the opposition. Neither the emergence nor the suppression of Solidarity was greatly influenced by détente and the CSCE process. Just as interestingly, the Polish opposition does not seem to have perceived the potential of the CSCE process until after the Belgrade conference. Jarząbek also raises important comparative questions: Why did the Czechoslovak and Soviet dissident movement not profit from the CSCE process? When the second CSCE follow-up meeting, held in Madrid 1980-1983, ended, the Soviet Helsinki movement had been all but crushed.

Reading Boel's and Jarząbek's articles back-to-back highlights important lacunae in the literature. The CSCE Final Act was the apogee of détente – a policy which had largely been propelled by western social democrats. Leading figures of west European social democracy, however, were adamantly opposed to using these human rights provisions to pressure communist governments. In Belgrade, it was the US and the Dutch who began to single out the Helsinki agreement's human rights aspects and to demand Soviet concessions. The West Germans, for instance, did not see the Final Act as primarily a human rights agreement. Bonn adopted a 'holistic' approach to the Final Act, seeing different aspects of the Final Act as mutually supportive elements of détente and peaceful change.[68] In 1977,

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[67] Daniel C. Thomas, *The Helsinki Effect: International Norms, Human Rights, and the Demise of Communism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Snyder, *Human Rights Activism*; Peterson, *Globalizing Human Rights*.

[68] Petri Hakkarainen, *A State of Peace in Europe: West Germany and the CSCE, 1966-1975* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2011); Matthias Peter, 'Sicherheit und Entspannung: Die KSZE-Politik der Bundesregierung in den Krisenjahren 1978–1981', in Helmut Altrichter and Hermann Wentker, eds., *Der KSZE-Prozess: Vom Kalten Krieg zum neuen Europa 1975 bis 1990* (München: Oldenbourg, 2012), 59-82; Kristina Spohr Readman, 'National Interests and the Power of "Language": West German Diplomacy and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, 1972–1975', *Journal of Strategic Studies* 29, 6 (2006), 1077-1120.

Willy Brandt wrote that he had great respect for Charter 77 which he dubbed a 'socialist opposition'. But he refused to speak out on their behalf and even argued that it was 'questionable' to give the impression as though the Final Act had created a 'district court in Helsinki' to which all human rights cases could be brought. Why, he asked, should we believe that the Final Act could achieve more in terms of improving the human rights situation than the UN human rights declarations and conventions?[69]

Trying to understand Brandt's attitude, it is again important to look at it within the political situation and intellectual processes of the 1970s. *Ostpolitik* was a project aimed at revising the cold war division of Europe. However, it was based on the dominant understanding of the international system of the time which saw the world as divided into sovereign, self-contained nation-states. In this realist imagination – and with many of the world's nation-states organized into two blocs engaged in a nuclear stand-off – individual claims to human rights simply had no role to play. If one wanted to improve the situation of the people of eastern Europe – and Brandt wanted to do that – one had to begin with the existing system of international relations. *Ostpolitik*, moreover, was a deeply social democratic project. Improvements for societies were expected to emerge from social and economic changes. As modern industrial societies, it was believed, the economic developments of communist countries would exert the same kind of modernization and liberalization pressures capitalist countries were subject to. By ameliorating east-west tensions and providing communist governments with a sense of security, room was to be created to allow these processes to play out.[70]

Dissent articulated a different understanding of international politics – one that was just about to gain momentum in the 1970s. Rather than judging the behaviour of Brandt and others by contemporary standards or drawing a direct causal line from *Ostpolitik* to '1989', we should historicize détente against the background of profound changes in the culture of international relations. In our time, human rights belong, as Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann observes, 'among those convictions of our society that are tacitly presumed to be self-evident truths and that define the space of the conceivable and utterable', but it was 'not until the last two decades of the twentieth century that human rights developed into the "lingua franca of global

[69] Brandt, 'Wider die alten Kreuzritter'; broader on his ideas see idem, *Menschenrechte mißhandelt und mißbraucht* (Reibeck bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1987).

[70] Robert Brier, 'The Helsinki Final Act, the Second Stage of Ostpolitik, and Human Rights in Eastern Europe: The Case of Poland', in Rasmus Mariager, Karl Molin and Poul Villaume, eds., *Human Rights in Europe During the Cold War* (London: Routledge, forthcoming).

moral thought".'[71] The dissidents were protagonists of this revolution; they were part of a global process in which victims of repression in different parts of the world and non-governmental actors gave new meaning to existing human rights documents. The 'radio waves' of human rights emanated from the activism of Soviet and eastern European activists.[72]

Human rights' rise to prominence broadened the group of the western supporters of the dissidents'. Yet, as noted above, it does not seem to have made international attention significantly less selective. These realities are reflected in the article by *Idesbald Goddeeris* and *Kim Christaens*. They provide a comparative perspective on transnational solidarity movements in the 1980s: following the suppression of Solidarity in 1981, Belgian trade unionists – along with labour activists from other countries – began to mount a campaign on behalf of their Polish colleagues.[73] But there were also critics of this campaign. The overwhelming attention paid to Lech Wałęsa and Solidarity, some people complained, drew attention away from human rights violations in Latin America. Thus, Goddeeris and Christaens compare the trade union campaign for Poland with the Belgian activism on behalf of Nicaragua. What the two authors show is how transnational solidarity is driven by the concerns of the supporters themselves. As a movement with a strongly Catholic dimension struggling for workers' rights in the 'Second World', Solidarity's appeals for help resonated strongly with the Christian trade unions in Belgium – the driving force of Belgian 'solidarity with Solidarity'. Solidarity's appeal had other sources as well: as a trade union which had become an icon of non-violent resistance and human rights, it provided a moral boost for the declining western labour movement. Solidarity with Nicaragua was supported by people who were critical not only of western foreign policy but of the western social system as well. In a way, then, both support groups that Goddeeris and Christaens write about projected their own political ideas onto the move-

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[71] Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann, 'Introduction: Genealogies of Human Rights', in idem, ed., *Human Rights*, 1-28, at 2.

[72] For reviews of the increasingly vast history on human rights see Jan Eckel, 'Humanitarisierung der internationalen Beziehungen? Menschenrechtspolitik in den 1970er Jahren', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 38, 4 (2012), 603-635; Samuel Moyn, 'Die neue Historiographie der Menschenrechte', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 38, 4 (2012), 545-572; Devin O. Pendas, 'Toward a New Politics? On the Recent Historiography of Human Rights', *Contemporary European History* 21, 1 (2012), 95-111; see also the contributions to Hoffmann, ed., *Human Rights*; Akira Iriye, Petra Goedde and William I. Hitchcock, eds., *The Human Rights Revolution: An International History* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

[73] On the wider campaign see Idesbald Goddeeris, ed., *Solidarity with Solidarity: Western European Trade Unions and the Polish Crisis, 1980-1982* (Lanham: Lexington, 2010).

ments they supported. Christaens and Goddeeris, in sum, describe a conflict where approval of the western system coincided with support of Solidarity and criticism of it with support of other causes.

The book's final contributions narrate different forms of interaction. Havel's 'Power of the Powerless'– focused as it was on the 'pre-political sphere' of human conscience – did not entail any reference to 'democratic socialism'. Famously, however, Havel saw the 'automatism of the post-totalitarian system [as] merely an extreme version of the global automatism of technological civilization' and of a 'general inability of modern humanity to be the master of its own situation'. The societies of the west could 'only with great difficulty be imagined as the source of humanity's rediscovery of itself' given their 'mass political parties run by professional apparatuses and releasing the citizen from all forms of concrete and personal responsibility', their 'complex focuses of capital accumulation engaged in secret manipulations and expansion' and 'the omnipresent dictatorship of consumption, production, advertising, commerce, consumer culture'.[74]

Given this rejection of western society, a number of the dissidents' western interlocutors began to wonder whether 'anti-politics' was merely a strategic necessity born out of the character of post-totalitarian societies or rather a new form of politics altogether. Petra Kelly, the charismatic figurehead of the early West German Green party, praised 'anti-politics' as an approach to politics that 'possesses power, but in a completely different moral and ethical sense'; this was the model she wanted her own Green party as an 'antiparty party' to follow. For her, anti-politics was embodied in 'creative ''disobedient'' forces' ranging 'from Philip Berrigan and Liz McAlister and the US Pledge of Resistance to Václav Havel (Charta 77) to Adam Michnik (Solidarność) to Katja Havemann (Women for Peace)'.[75]

Out of this perception of 'anti-politics' evolved the most important western intellectual debate that focused on the dissidents. At the centre of this debate was the idea of a 'civil society'. In contemporary political science, the term 'civil society' has come to denote a sphere of social life where citizens are habituated into the norms of representative democracy. Applying this term to Poland's Solidarity or Václav Benda's idea of a

[74] Havel, 'Power of the Powerless', 91.

[75] Petra Kelly, 'Defending Values', manuscript for a speech given at the END convention, Amsterdam, 5 Jul. 1985, Mappe 1050, Petra-Kelly-Archiv, Archiv Grünes Gedächtnis, on her view of anti-politics as a model for political action more generally see Ruth A. Bevan, 'Petra Kelly: The Other Green', *New Political Science* 23, 2 (2001), 181-202; see also Saskia Richter, *Die Aktivistin: Das Leben der Petra Kelly* (München: DVA, 2010); for a similar interpretation of Poland's Solidarity by a US peace activists see Jonathan Schell's 'Introduction' to Adam Michnik, *Letters From Prison and Other Essays* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), xvii-xlii.

'parallel polis', writers like John Keane, Jeffrey Isaac or Andrew Arato have given it a different meaning. Echoing a view widely held among the dissidents' western admirers, Isaac wrote that 'anti-politics' implicated 'a more radically democratic kind of political praxis' than the one dominating western societies.[76] Given their strong ethos of political participation and solidarity, east central European dissident movements were seen as models of how citizens could take responsibility for their collective life and effect political change. The anti-political civil society was thus seen as a means of helping western societies to bring out the full potential of democracy.[77]

These kinds of discourses prepared the ground for transnational dialogues discussed in the remaining two contributions to this volume. As human rights activist were appealing for western support, *Kacper Szulecki* shows that they were facing a powerful contender for international attention: the massive peace movements that had emerged in western Europe in response to the NATO dual-track decision of 1979. Many of the members of these movements were actually quite sympathetic to the cause of the Soviet bloc opposition. They feared, however, that the deployment of the new middle range missiles might lead to war; therefore, they wanted to avoid everything that could destabilize the international situation or divide the ranks of the peace movement. Human rights and peace appeared as goals contradicting each other. Perceiving this problem, as Szulecki documents, members of Charter 77 and the post-Solidarność generation of Polish opposition activists initiated a dialogue with some groups in the western peace movements. Human rights activism, the dissidents argued, does not contradict the quest for peace; human rights activism goes to the root of the threat of war: the totalitarian nature of the communist systems. This idea – while controversial with many western peace activists – nevertheless created a common east-west context in which a dialogue on peace and human rights could evolve. In the late 1980s, this even led to an initiative for supplementing the Helsinki process with a social dimension and to the organization of joint peace seminars in Poland. Again, 'radio waves' – peace and human rights – could produce the 'electromagnetic forces' that draw people from different countries together.

Szulecki also shows how eastern dissidents actively shaped a transnational discourse on peace and human rights. Christaens and Goddeeris, too,

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[76] Jeffrey C. Isaac, 'The Meanings of 1989', *Social Research* 63, 2 (1996), 291-344, at 305.

[77] Andrew Arato, *From Neo-Marxism to Democratic Theory: Essays on the Critical Theory of Soviet-type Societies* (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1993); cf. Agnes Arndt, *Intellektuelle in der Opposition: Diskurse zur Zivilgesellschaft in der Volksrepublik Polen* (Frankfurt am Main, New York: Campus, 2007).

highlight that victims of repression or the targets of international solidarity campaigns could play an active role in their relations with their western supporters. Activists of Poland's Solidarity even tried to overcome the competition between different solidarity campaigns: Solidarity actively sought to strike symbolic alliances with Chilean activists or with the cause of the anti-apartheid struggle, as Christaens and Goddeeris show.

Holger Nehring deals with a topic similar to Szulecki's but does so in the specific context of German-German relations. In both West and East Germany, Nehring shows, peace movements emerged in response to their relative governments' policies of modernizing the country's nuclear arsenals. Relations between the two movements were often marred by conflicts triggered by the cordial contacts which the West Germans established with the GDR's rulers or its official youth organization. Nevertheless, peace activists in east and west perceived each other's activities and East German exiles in the FRG such as Rudolf Bahro and Wolf Biermann, journalists, or activists of the West German Green party established direct contacts. Moreover, the two movements shared not only a specific policy issue they protested against, but also a specific approach to their political protest. What they criticized was not only the decision to deploy a new type of missile, but also the understanding of democracy underlying this decision – an understanding in which vital decisions were relegated to government agencies. In a sense, then, the social protest emerging in the two Germanys can be characterised as a form of anti-politics: what the activists sought was not political influence or institutional power. Their protest was a means of dealing with their fear of nuclear annihilation; thus, the protesters wanted to transform society by way of an individual self-transformation focused on themes such as reconciliation, tolerance and solidarity. With their joint concerns, the two movements created a new sense of 'Germanness'. However, spreading their view of the relationship between government and society as well as their perspective on violence and peace, they also initiated a transformation of the two countries' political cultures. In this way, they helped bring about the peaceful character of the revolution of 1989. *Nehring*'s article, then, is a particularly good example of the insight that leaving traditional narratives about the cold war behind does not render us silent about explaining the course of the cold war and the way in which it ended.

Nehring's article touches upon a theme which runs through most articles in this book, but is nowhere dealt with systematically: the role of religion in dissent. Nehring shows how the Protestant churches in Germany provided shelter for independent activists in the GDR and a transnational space of communication between the two German states. Catholicism played a similar role: in Poland, in particular, Catholic parishes provided a space

where oppositionists could meet; Catholics also played a visible role in Charter 77.[78] As a quintessentially transnational discourse, moreover, Christianity also acted as a 'radio wave': The Catholic church's rather sudden endorsement of religious liberty at the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) was an important impetus for the Polish opposition's turn to human rights, especially when the sermons of John Paul II during his 1979 trip to Poland invoked human rights.[79] Similar processes took place in Latin America; here, the Catholic church's behaviour varied from apathy and at times even tacit support for military dictatorships (such as in Argentina) to a strong endorsement of human rights activism (such as in Chile or Brazil).[80] These varieties suggest that future research into the role of the churches in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union will bring a very complex picture to light; no direct causal lines connect Vatican II or Karol Wojtyła's ascending 'the throne of St. Peter' to '1989'.[81]

Religion leads to a final theme: though John Paul II was undoubtedly highly influential in the 1980s, '[f]ew Europeans today', Jan-Werner Müller writes, 'would know what to make of the term "Christian personalism"' that formed the basis of the Polish pope's understanding of human rights.[82] Other discourses associated with dissent fared no better: whether the supporters of the dissident groups were traditional trade unionists or new-left social activists, none of the ideas they projected onto dissent were implemented after 1989. They saw human rights as connected to questions of solidarity and political participation; individual rights were supposed to empower people to take control of their collective lives. Post-communist eastern Europe, however, was shaped by the ideas of what Daniel T. Rodgers calls the 'great age of fracture' – a time when the unfettered market became the dominant paradigm of social thought as 'conceptions of

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[78] Kenney, *Carnival of Revolution*, 34-42.

[79] See Jarząbek's contribution below. An important document for how 'post-conciliar' Polish Catholics adopted human rights is Bohdan Cywiński, *Rodowody niepokornych* (Warszawa: Biblioteka 'Więzi', 1971); on the difficult relationship between Catholicism and human rights see Daniel Philpott, 'The Catholic Wave', *Journal of Democracy* 15, 2 (2004), 32-46; Bernhard Sutor, 'Katholische Kirche und Menschenrechte: Kontinuität oder Diskontinuität in der kirchlichen Soziallehre?', *Forum für osteuropäische Ideen- und Zeitgeschichte* 12, 1 (2008), 141-158.

[80] Jan Eckel, 'Neugeburt der Politik aus dem Geist der Moral: Erklärungen einer heterogenen Konjunktur', in Eckel and Moyn, eds., *Moral für die Welt?*, 21-67, at 37-38.

[81] For a particularly egregious interpretation see George Weigel, *The Final Revolution: The Resistance Church and the Collapse of Communism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

[82] Jan-Werner Müller, *Contesting Democracy: Political Ideas in Twentieth-Century Europe* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011), 241.

human nature that [...] had been thick with context, social circumstance, institutions, and history gave way to conceptions of human nature that stressed choice, agency, performance and desire'.[83]

For some of the dissidents themselves the transitions after 1989 seem to have had a bittersweet dimension. Speaking to an audience at Stanford University in 1994, Havel noted how, after the end of the cold war, 'democracy is seen less and less as an open system best able to respond to people's basic needs, that is, as a set of possibilities that continually must be sought, redefined, and brought into being. Instead, democracy is seen as something given, finished, and complete as is, something that the more enlightened purchase and the less enlightened do not.'[84] As important as it is, in sum, to see the dissidents as agents of transnational history, we should not lose sight of how they were embedded in processes they helped to shape, but the outcomes of which they neither foresaw nor controlled.

Conclusions

The rise of 'transnational history' does not signal a paradigm shift in historiographical research. Used with restraint and care, though, it does highlight something fundamentally important: it shows how seemingly local events are entangled in wider networks of interconnections and in broader, even global processes. Havel's 'The Power of the Powerless' was widely perceived as a manifesto of individual defiance based on an Orwellian vision of society; read from a transnational perspective, however, it turns out that it was located at the intersection of a series of processes and discourses through which people established contact, circulated ideas, shared information and created bonds of solidarity cutting across national borders and even across the 'iron curtain'. Following the different threads that run through this document helps us to understand dissent better and it helps us to appreciate dissent as a factor of major global processes of the late cold war: the eclipse of Marxism, the rise of human rights and the emergence of new forms of transnational activism. This manifesto of 'dissent' – precisely by discussing a foreign label Havel would not have used himself – documents the reality of transnational history.

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[83] Daniel T. Rodgers, *Age of Fracture* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2011), 3, 247-253.

[84] Václav Havel, 'Forgetting We Are Not God', *First Things* 6 (1995), 47-49, at 48.

Padraic Kenney

Electromagnetic Forces and Radio Waves *or* Does Transnational History Actually Happen?

In the summer of 1998, I was conducting research in Budapest, trying to understand how the revolutionary changes in Hungary in 1989 fit into the overall pattern of revolution in the region. I had spent a year in Poland interviewing hundreds of opposition activists, especially those of the younger generation (who were in their teens or twenties when communism ended). I knew that many in the Polish opposition were interested in the opposition movements among their neighbours; all one had to do was read the underground papers to see this was true.

As I began to research the Hungarian case, I was struck by how much the leading youth opposition of 1987-88, Fidesz (the Association of Young Democrats), resembled the most significant youth movement in Poland, Freedom and Peace (WiP). WiP, the most important new opposition force in eastern Europe after Solidarity, was formed in 1985 to protest the required military oath, and grew into a multi-issue movement active all across Poland. Its focus on concrete issues, its emphasis on aboveground work and its indifference to political divisions (embracing anarchists and conservatives) distinguished it. And as I learned about Fidesz – founded in 1988 by a group of law students – the similarities were obvious. Though today Fidesz is a right-wing party (still led by Viktor Orbán, one of its founders), in its first year it was precisely as I have described WiP. It demonstrated on environmental issues, supported conscientious objectors, and displayed a confrontational yet non-ideological style that contrasted with the politics of its elders.

Circumstantial evidence, though, should not be enough for the historian of modern multinational events. Societies are not chemical compositions, giving rise to similar phenomena under similar conditions; nor are they elements in a demonstration of a domino effect. Historians need to ask themselves, yet rarely do so: how and why are phenomena similar to one another? Even when we know that two societies have similar political and

economic systems, how can they give rise to similar phenomena – especially when those two states place restrictions upon travel and media access and have mutually unintelligible languages?

So I went to Budapest to look for clues. I began to interview members or ex-members of Fidesz. I confirmed the basic similarity of Fidesz and WiP and became more impressed with their ingenuity and certain of their impact upon the political transformation. But I found no direct link. On my last day in Budapest, shortly before catching a train to Zagreb for my next phase of research, I sat down in a coffee shop with a former Fidesz member named Péter Molnár. As we chatted, I explained that my research had begun with Poland, and, in fact, my wife's family lived in Wrocław. Molnár perked up: 'Wrocław! Yes, I remember. I visited there in – what was it, 1985?'

Suddenly I had my link. Molnár, it turned out, remembered the story wrong, as he had not been to Wrocław. But the story turned out to be even more interesting: Molnár's teachers, two young political scientists named István Stumpf and Tamás Fellegi, had developed such an interest in Poland and Solidarity that they went to visit in 1983 (for the second papal pilgrimage). Back home, they had received permission to create a college for law students from outside Budapest. These students, mostly from provincial towns, had little understanding of politics, but Fellegi and Stumpf thought of them as Hungary's future. Polish oppositional politics fascinated them, and they decided that their students should discover it too. So over the next few years, they took their students on field trips to Warsaw, Poznań, Kraków and Gdańsk (as far as I can tell, they did not visit Wrocław). They participated in masses and demonstrations and got to know students in Freedom and Peace.[1]

Well, here was the smoking gun. As I learned, these students and their teachers explicitly studied Polish opposition, with the intention of applying these lessons to their own situation. Fidesz was built, in other words, on a Polish model. There were other Polish-Hungarian connections, but this one was the most significant. The communication and travel between opposition activists in Poland and Hungary played an important, if little-known, role in the fall of communism in 1989. I would submit that 26-year-old Viktor Orbán would not have made his famous incendiary speech in June 1989 at the ceremonial reburial of Imre Nagy without his Polish experience. Fidesz would not have broken with the older opposition that autumn without that experience, either.

[1] I tell this story in more detail in *A Carnival of Revolution: Central Europe, 1989* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002).

This is transnational history at its purest. We do not see dominoes falling, or *Zeitgeists* maturing, or unstoppable forces of history, but young men from one country entering an apartment in another country, finding people who are like them in age and background but who act very differently. We see them learning how to act in this new way and then taking that mode of action home with them. We see them borrowing not concrete techniques or traditions (most of the Hungarians were not practicing Catholics, for example), but ways of thinking and acting. And the crossing of borders itself is as essential to the story as is the interaction.

There are many other examples of such activity in the years 1985–1989 in central Europe. There were Ukrainian hippies corresponding with Polish peace activists or with Lithuanian nationalists; Polish couriers carrying backpacks full of literature to Czechoslovakia, or arranging clandestine border meetings along the Karkonosze/Krkonoše Mountains; East Germans travelling through Poland in search of *Zivilcourage* – on the same pathways, incidentally, taken by west European peace activists. I have spent a longer time on this particular anecdote for three reasons. Firstly, it shows that the year 1989 did have a transnational element, and I have been focused on that element for a long time – most recently with a book on the events of 1989 on four continents.[2] Secondly, it is worth emphasizing that this kind of transnational connection is hard for the historian to find. Such individual border crossings are ephemeral and usually undocumented; they are also, I believe, quite potent, as the individual traveller shares his or her experience with a large circle of contacts. And thirdly, I also want to question the very nature of transnational history, even as I acknowledge its role. But in order to discuss what transnational history is not, and cannot be, I must first acknowledge what it is. To forecast my conclusions, the revolutions of 1989 in eastern Europe show us that transnational activity takes place during periods of heightened political activity and over short distances among people who share common interests and skills. They are like atoms in a molecule, bound together and exchanging information over short distances; thus if the opposition in the Soviet bloc was a molecule (of what, I will leave to the reader), transnational interactions are like the electromagnetic force binding them closer together.

The question for me is whether this force also works at greater distances and among less similar places. When I first became interested in the phenomenon of transnational borrowings, inspirations and movements, it came to seem like this might be a key to liberating historical processes from traditional limits, as well as an essential tool in comprehending the contem-

[2] Padraic Kenney, *1989: Democratic Revolutions at the Cold War's End: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford / St. Martin's 2010).

porary world. As far as reimagining history is concerned: we can all think of times in history when events in a number of countries have seemed to follow one another. Before 1989, there was 1968, and 1956, and 1945, and 1933, and 1917–20, and 1848, and 1830–31… surely I have left out a few, and I am thinking so far only of Europe. Each of these has a traditional narrative, which falls into one of two types: either there is a single force (like the Bolshevik Party, Nikita Khrushchev, Mikhail Gorbachev, Adolf Hitler) that either forces change or provokes reaction in a number of places nearly all at once, or there is an undefined 'revolutionary situation' (the *Zeitgeist*, in other words) that miraculously appears from nowhere. My dogged and successful search for the multilingual messengers or pilgrims of revolution in Budapest led me to believe that in every revolution we might find similar figures, working under the radar to bring new ideas. Thus a recent book on 1968 tells us that *before* students struck at the Sorbonne in May, they were visited, in March, by a busload of students from Louvain, Belgium, who spread the news of their struggle against university authorities.[3] Czech students, that same year, visited the wounded Rudi Dutschke in his hospital bed in Berlin.[4] Further back, we can wish we could know what ideas or perspectives or ways of acting might have been shared among people of different nations on the streets or in the cafés of Petrograd, Paris, or Padua.

All these are moments of revolution: but do we not exchange ideas all the time? If so, then historians of modern feminism or of the anti-nuclear movement might wish to avoid the traditional focus on national campaigns against this or that law or nuclear reactor and ask how repertoires of protest are learned and imported. So too historians of socialism, or of millenarian religions, or of science would gain from thinking beyond national borders.

This is hardly a new idea, but it does have a new name. 'Transnational' implies that the journey across borders is itself significant, and the conscious interaction that sidesteps or burrows under walls and bureaucracies makes it new. At its most romantic, the 'transnational' appears to be a celebration of the impossibility of keeping humans apart, even with armies and border guards and separate educational systems.

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[3] Gerd-Rainer Horn, *The Spirit of '68: Rebellion in Western Europe and North America, 1956–1976* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

[4] Paulina Bren, '1968 East and West: Visions of Political Change and Student Protest from Across the Iron Curtain', in Gerd-Rainer Horn and Padraic Kenney, eds., *Transnational Moments of Change: Europe 1945, 1968, 1989* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), 119-135.

We are also conscious of living in a different world today. Yes, there is a global history that goes back to prehistoric times. But the number of ways through which we can communicate, and the speed with which we can do so, bring qualitative differences, or so it would seem. If in 1848 I would have needed to devote weeks in order to travel to Paris to hear Adam Mickiewicz lecture, now I could download his podcasts instantly (and check out Słowacki's YouTube response as well). Ideas and styles can spread with a greater immediacy and intimacy than we thought possible, reaching more people. The globalization trope has taken over public discourse over the last two decades. We have a sense that ordinary humans, especially those seeking solutions to political or economic problems, are ever more comfortable with accepting influences from other cultures and with joining in international activities. Even xenophobia stands out in greater contrast than before in its explicit resistance to globalizing forces.

In my field of interest, revolutionary changes in eastern Europe, nothing is more emblematic of the apparent power of the transnational than the presence of young men and women from Serbia in Georgia and Ukraine in 2003 and 2004. They represented the OTPOR (Resistance) movement that had played a decisive role in toppling Slobodan Milošević in 2000. Incidentally, their style and tactics seemed rather familiar – but more about that later. The students of OTPOR had developed their attack on Milošević – and also on the elder opposition politicians who seemed to hesitate – very carefully, even turning to friends in the advertising business for advice. The world was a very different place by 2000, both in terms of technology and in terms of international support for anti-authoritarian movements. In part because OTPOR members found themselves unable to get easily into national politics (much like WiP in Poland), some of them were eager to take their experience on the road. They quickly found supporters both in the NGO world and in government and were thus available to coach activists in other post-communist countries (particularly in the former Soviet Union) as the 'Colour Revolutions' took shape.[5]

Some have seen in this story the evil hand of American imperialism. I will ignore that debate here, because I do not believe that a few thousand dollars for T-shirts, laptops and 'revolution consultants' can create a revolution out of nothing where there are no willing activists. I am more interested in how perspectives, mine included, on transnational political change have modified themselves since these events have taken place. If we return to 2005, one could see prior to that an almost continuous wave of democra-

[5] The essential work on the transnationality of the Color Revolutions is Valerie J. Bunce and Sharon L. Wolchik's *Defeating Authoritarian Leaders in Postcommunist Countries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

tizing revolutions, stretching at least from the Philippines in 1986 (or from Portugal in 1974 and Spain and Greece in 1975) through to Chile in 1988, then eastern Europe and the Soviet Union through to the Colour Revolutions. The late winter of 2005 saw an upheaval in Kyrgyzstan after a parliamentary election and the 'Cedar Revolution' in Lebanon against Syrian influence. At about the same time, some observers saw Iraqi political change reaching a milestone with a successful parliamentary election.

So if someone would like to write the history of transnational studies, I would suggest that its heyday spanned a fifteen-year period, and we are now in crisis. I use the term 'crisis' here as a scholar, not as an observer of contemporary politics. There may be a crisis of democracy across the world, but that is a different problem from the one of how we interpret the world. Nevertheless, let us begin by taking stock of where revolutions are today. The Colour Revolutions seem to have faded; their leaders are mostly out of power (like Viktor Yushchenko in Ukraine or Mikheil Saakashvili in Georgia), often carrying the taint of authoritarianism themselves. New terms like 'illiberal democracy' or 'competitive authoritarianism' have been employed to analyze many of the regimes that have experienced some kind of unsatisfactory political transformation. Scholars have thus raised doubts about the value of such things as elections or even the existence of opposition parties as markers for democratic change.

Beyond this, we now have a recent history of democratization movements that have not succeeded. The best known are the Burmese 'Saffron Revolution' in the summer of 2007 and the 'Green Revolution' protests following the Iranian presidential election in 2009. Both of these drew extensive international coverage and some significant support, yet were effectively quashed (though Burma is now democratizing). More interesting, for our purposes, is a third recent example, the so-called Twitter Revolution in Moldova in April 2009. There, dissatisfaction with the election outcome (and failure to oust the communists from power) crystallized in a 'flashmob' demonstration on April 6. That the protesters used their cell phones to organize demonstrations and that some used Twitter (or other texting modes) to share microviews of the demonstrations and repressions as they happened, caught the imagination of western technological elites and commentators. If the entire world could thus participate in a revolution, would not dictators be finally outmatched by their opponents? Moldovans could thus participate in transnational change – symbolized by imported technology and an online environment in which borders became meaningless. Rather than waiting for support or begging journalists to intercede on their behalf (a familiar part of revolutions just two decades earlier), Moldovans could propagate such change themselves.

Despite the small size of the country and its proximity to the EU, the evident proliferation of new technologies, and the size of the protests, the revolution failed. New elections were called and the communists won again, albeit with more opposition represented. More importantly, though, the Twitter Revolution turned out to be a myth; a transnational technology itself does not bring about change, politics does. In Moldova, the pieces needed for political change simply were not present. One observer (a Belarusian, as it happens) quotes Moldovan activists as saying that what they needed was not Twitter, but a loud megaphone.[6] In other words, local and basic technology, combined with the right content, would have been the key.

In the age of the transnational, then, we should remember that revolutions tend ultimately to be locally generated. The attitude and resources of the local regime matter; the coordination of opposition elites matters; generational experiences, rooted in one place, matter; so too do national/local economics and the weather. The evident limitations of transnational processes should force us to examine again the extravagant claims that have been made about a thirty-year wave of democratization. A wide-angle look at the core of that wave, the eight years from 1986 (the Philippines and Haiti) to 1994 (South Africa), finds few examples of the kind of transmission we can see between Poland and Hungary in 1989.

For example, Filipinos often imagine that their 'People Power' revolution influenced the revolutions in eastern Europe – as they themselves occasionally compared their struggle to that of Solidarity. Closer to home, it is easy to assume a link from the Philippines to democratization elsewhere in Southeast Asia, especially Indonesia's transformation in 1998. Research has shown, however, that there was no (or only limited) transference of ideas or styles. At most, one can find the appropriation of symbols, as when some South Koreans employed the Filipino 'Laban' sign during protests in 1988.[7]

China provides a second example. Chinese protesters were very interested in the course of events in eastern Europe, reading Václav Havel, following the Polish Round Table, and welcoming Mikhail Gorbachev to Beijing. We may also remember their 'Goddess of Liberty' statue, which echoed the American one while also evoking the protests around inspira-

[6] Evgeny Morozov, 'More Analysis of Twitter's Role in Moldova', *Net.effect,* 7 April 2009, available at www.neteffect.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/04/07/more_analysis_of_twitters_role_in_moldova (last visited 12 December 2012).

[7] On the absence of transnationality in Southeast Asia see Vincent Boudreau, *Resisting Dictatorship: Repression and Protest in Southeast Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

tional statues in Europe. Yet a close reading of student statements during the occupation of Tiananmen Square shows a poverty of ideas. They were quite uncertain what to do with 'democracy', and at moments of crisis, such as during meetings with leaders or while on hunger strike, they tended instead to invoke strident nationalism and to speak of bloodshed and sacrifice. The Tiananmen occupation was not an eastern European event that ended tragically, but rather an entirely different animal with its own logic. A final example comes from South Africa. Leaders of the African National Congress were quite aware of eastern Europe. (Working in the Robben Island archives recently, I found notes from a discussion about Solidarity that took place in a cell there in 1981.) And when they had achieved victory, they turned to, among others, participants in Poland's Round Table for advice on how to reconcile with one's former torturers. Yet at the heart of the transformation, the African context mattered most to the exclusion of any other. South Africa was a special case, with (fortunately) few analogues.

Much as I would like to tell a different story, I cannot find much evidence for a global 'dance of democracy'. Oppressed people do rise up, but they do so on their own terms, in their own contexts. Why, then, is there simultaneity if it is not thanks to transnational processes? In brief, I would point to four global factors: generational turnover, technological advances, human rights discourse, and the waning of the cold war. I think that the import of each of these is self-evident, so I will simply outline how I see them influencing change, before returning to the problem of the transnational.[8]

Thinking of generational change, I have in mind the significant differences between the '1968' generation and that of 1989. The students in 1968 were in part rebelling against the cold war concerns of its parents (who were in turn a product, around the world, of the common experience of the second world war). People who came of age in the 1980s – and I think this can be observed not only in eastern Europe, but also in western Europe, South Africa, and Latin America – were less interested in ideology than the generation of the 1960s, and more interested in concrete action. This was less true in China, and one could hypothesize that the failures of Tiananmen were in part due to this difference.

I have already alluded to the role technology played in the 1980s. It is striking to note how many communication technologies, largely unavailable to protest in the 1960s, were invented or made affordable in the 1970s: cable television, satellite dishes, video cameras, video cassettes, cassette and microcassette recorders, fax machines, photocopiers, offset printers

[8] The following paragraphs are based on the introduction to Kenney, *1989*.

and personal computers (cell phones and the internet do not play a role at this point, of course). I would add to this list one that is often overlooked: the container ship. In the face of our current belief in the liberating power of technology, it is instructive to see what an impact relatively modest technological advances could have for opposition, such as smaller, mobile printers or fax machines. No one thought, however, that the printer was itself the message, which is the implication of our current fascination with Twitter. I would suggest that the megaphone – not necessarily the easiest thing to acquire or hide from the police – made as great an impact as did the first desktop computers.

A discussion of technology must lead us to content. The 1970s were crucial, too, to the development of a global human-rights discourse. Amnesty International, though founded in 1962, gained critical mass only in the late 1970s at the time that Helsinki Watch and its sister organizations (Asia Watch, etc.) were emerging. As discussion of human rights became a normal part of global discourse – used regularly, even if superficially, by American presidents, U.N. leaders and of course the Pope – it became accessible, at the same time, to opposition groups around the world. Even if Czechs, Chinese and Chileans thought of human rights in slightly different ways, they had a common toolkit and a common way of interacting with international media.

Finally, though I prefer to think of democratic opposition itself as contributing to the end of the cold war, one has to acknowledge that the weakening of the cold war in the mid-1980s made change easier. The lessening international reach of the Soviet Union even before Gorbachev's ascendancy and Ronald Reagan's declining interest in his anti-communist allies in his second term of office fed on each other. As Reagan was able, reluctantly, to cease supporting Ferdinand Marcos despite the latter's pleas for help against communist guerrillas, so too Gorbachev would be reluctant to write the East German communists a blank check, and F.W. de Klerk would find it easier to legalize the South African Communist Party.

I have simplified the story a great deal, but what do these factors have in common? First, they are global. Second, though, they are less visible at the national level, where they are translated into terms that vary from one another in significant ways. They are, in other words, weak factors – weak in the way that radio waves might be in comparison to the electromagnetic force I mentioned earlier. They exist in the background, as a constant presence and are by themselves not enough to bring about change.

Much of the time when we think we are talking about transnational history, I think we are talking about radio waves – in a figurative sense, though also literally. Over long distances (and, as it happens, often through radio technology), people do learn about the ideas and activities of others

who face broadly similar obstacles. But the similarities – even similarities in outcomes, as we saw in the years 1986-1994 – are not evidence of a transnational moment. The occasional appearances of transnational actors (like Mikhail Gorbachev going to Beijing in May 1989) are exceptions that prove the rule: Gorbachev's presence, after all, did not help China move down the path taken by Poland and its neighbours. Instead, we are looking at a global history, shaped by larger, worldwide structural factors. And those factors, whether they are new ideas, new technologies, or social and political changes become quite different from one another within different national contexts.

Transnational history does exist. In certain situations, marked by close affinity, shared experiences and relatively short distances (though not on the molecular scale!), intense interactions that spread concrete solutions to practical problems can take place. Moreover, the electromagnetic forces of transnational history give rise to new phenomena that can move around the world. The Round Table formula, begun in Poland and quickly adopted elsewhere in the region, is an example of such a reinvented form of action that becomes global.[9] But historians who would search for the 'transnational' in everything run the risk of trivializing such communication and of missing content in favour of form. Approached with care, the transnational approach allows us to appreciate the intense beauty of regional political change.

[9] See Michael D. Kennedy, 'Contingencies and the Alternatives of 1989: Toward a Theory and Practice of Negotiating Revolution', *East European Politics and Society* 13, 1 (1999), 301-310.

II. Mutual Contacts, East-West Intermediaries, Transnational Discourses

Tomáš Vilímek

Oppositionists in the ČSSR and the GDR

Mutual Awareness, Exchanges of Ideas and Cooperation, 1968-1989

'For us, the existence of the Charter and other human rights movements in eastern Europe has been and remains an encouragement and source of inspiration.' This is how the 'Letter to Charter 77' from the 'Initiative for Freedom and Human Rights' (*Initiative Frieden und Menschenrechte* – IFM) reads as published in January 1987. This is one of the most well-known pieces of evidence for the awareness in the GDR of the Czechoslovakian opposition.[1] The following essay focuses on this cross-border interaction of regime-critical and oppositionist *acteurs* and groups in both East Germany and the ČSSR. In addition to such perceptions of one another, it asks about the possibilities for and limits on the exchange of ideas and cooperation and places these in a comparative eastcentral European context.

Researching the mutual perceptions of these representatives of eastern European dissidence opens up a comparative perspective and contributes thereby to a deepening of our knowledge of this phenomenon. In this way, the similarities and the differences of actions critical of the regimes in the individual countries of the east bloc can be better understood and the historical development of various ideas of the dissent better followed. What are referred to as the 'steps of the disintegration of the whole system' (György Dalos) of the eastern bloc (meaning the years 1953, 1956, 1968 and not least 1980/81) are especially important in the research of the mutual awareness of the dissidents, as Jaroslav Šabata, a spokesperson for Charter 77 and co-author of the Prague Appeal of March 1985, expressed so succinctly: 'The reciprocal influence cannot be reduced down to the progress of the individual initiatives. We must integrate the larger history into our

[1] 10 Jahre Charta 77, 10. Jan. 1987, Initiative für Frieden und Menschenrechte 1.1.01 (sheet 1), Matthias-Domaschk-Archiv, Robert-Havemann-Gesellschaft, Berlin (hereafter: MDA-RHG).

reflections, both its impacts and how it was processed in the actual countries.' [2]

The 'Prague Spring' and the Rise of Regime-Critical Groups in the GDR

The letter from the IFM quoted at the beginning of this essay was written at a highpoint of mutual East German-Czechoslovak awareness of one another in which both sides were seeking to institutionalise cross-border cooperation. This phase had begun in the middle of the 1980s and reached its climax with declarations of solidarity in 1988/89. It followed two other such moments related to two historical events: the Prague Spring and the publication of Charter 77.

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[2] Jaroslav Šabata, interview with the author, Brno, 30 Aug. 2007. – This current study draws both on discussions that took place in the course of a project sponsored by the Volkswagen-Foundation entitled 'The Other Eastern Europe' (2007–2009) in which the author participated, as well as on those which he conducted during his earlier research on the Czechoslovak and East German opposition. The conversations were conducted in 2006 with Ulrike Poppe, Ralf Hirsch, Ludwig Mehlhorn, Reinhard Weißhuhn, Wolfgang Templin and Gerd Poppe. The primary focus was on the perception of Czechoslovakia. With the latter two persons, a broader discussion was conducted in the context of the project for the Volkswagen-Foundation. With reference to that, see also Tomáš Vilímek, *Solidarita napříč hranicemi: Opozice v ČSSR a v NDR po roce 1968* (Prague: Nakladatelství Vyšehrad, 2010). In addition, it presents discussions that Alexander von Plato conducted in the framework of the VW-Foundation project, an important source of information. – In addition there are as well the results of biographical research in the Czech Republic which happened primarily at the Institute for Contemporary History of the Czech Academy of Sciences (ÚSD AV ČR). One can find an overview of this at www.coh.usd.cas.cz/pages_cz/sbirky.htm (last visited Feb. 2013). In 2005, the first results of this project 'Die politische Elite und der Dissens in der Zeit der sogenannten Normalisierung' was presented at the Centre for Oral History at the Institute for Contemporary History in Prague. In addition to the approximately 120 transcribed conversations, ten studies were also published. Miroslav Vaněk, Pavel Urbášek, eds., *Vítězové? Poražení? Životopisná interview*, 1 vol. (Prague: Prostor, 2005). These are concerned, among other things, with the different aspects of the Czechoslovak dissidence, with its international links, and the repressive methods of the Czechoslovak security services. See Tomáš Vilímek: 'Vnímání mezinárodních souvislostí představiteli komunistických elit a disentu-represivní metody StB a pobyt v komunistických věznicích', in Vaněk et. al., *Vítězové?,* 353-394. – Additionally, a large number of studies, memoirs, published conversations and not least of all archive materials from state and opposition provenance have been used. From among these archives, the following deserve primary reference: the Archive of the Security Services of the Czech Republic (Archiv bezpečnostních složek České republiky), the Archive of the Federal Commissioner for the Documents of the State Security Service of the former German Democratic Republic (Bundesbeauftragter für die Stasi-Unterlagen, BStU), MDA-RHG (see footnote 1) and the Archive of the Prohibited Books (libri prohibiti), Library of Samizdat and Exile Literature (Knihovna samizdatové a exilové literatury).

The Prague Spring played a special role in the development of people critical of the regime in the GDR. In that year, many people came into conflict with the regime for the first time; some were sentenced to terms of imprisonment and not a few lost their belief in the ability of socialism to be reformed. The state propaganda directed against the Prague Spring and the intervention in August 1968 were both markedly rejected in East German society even if open criticism was almost solely expressed at home. The regime forced many people to sign declarations in which they welcomed the intervention. As Stefan Wolle commented, many young people walked into the trap set by the government security service.[3]

Roman Herzog correctly pointed out[4] that the populace of the GDR was the one which was most intensely aware of Czechoslovakia at that point in 1968. The later representatives of East German dissent do not constitute an exception. Reinhard Weißhuhn remembered that 'Czechoslovakia played an important role, which (as was mostly the case with us) was of course probably connected with the Prague Spring, which I had actually followed with the greatest attention.' (Weißhuhn was the co-founder of the IFM and otherwise had been more interested in the developments in Hungary.) Although the invasion had not overly surprised him, it was nevertheless an 'existential experience'. Subsequently he did not want to have anything more to do with the system in the GDR: 'That was an essential moment in my incipient politicization.'[5] As Gerd Poppe, one of the leading figures in the East Berlin opposition scene, also recounted: 'The joining in solidarity with the Prague reformers on 21 August 1968 and the handing over of a declaration at the Czechoslovak embassy became for me the first clear and publicly protest [I] carried out against the Soviet and the SED regime.'[6] As Robert Havemann wrote in his *Biography of a German Marxist*, the year of 1968 was for many 'the year of great hopes and bitter disappointments'.[7]

Roland Jahn, whom the invasion 'sobered up', recounted: 'We knew that what was in the GDR was not socialism, and so we were interested in

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[3] Stefan Wolle: 'Die versäumte Revolte: Die DDR und das Jahr 1968', *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, 22-23 (2001), 37-46, at 45.

[4] Doris Liebermann, Jürgen Fuchs, Vlasta Wallat, eds., *Dissidenten, Präsidenten und Gemüsehändler: Tschechische und ostdeutsche Dissidenten 1968-1998* (Essen: Klartext-Verlag, 1998), 245.

[5] Reinhard Weißhuhn, interview with the author, Berlin, 25 Apr. 2006.

[6] Marlies Jansen, *Materialien der Enquete-Kommission 'Aufarbeitung von Geschichte und Folgen der SED-Diktatur in Deutschland: Deutschlandpolitik, innerdeutsche Beziehungen und internationale Rahmenbedingungen'*, vol. V/1 (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1995), 147.

[7] Robert Havemann: *Fragen, Antworten, Fragen: Aus der Biographie eines deutschen Marxisten* (München: Piper, 1970), 230.

what was happening in the ČSSR.'[8] Something had unfolded in the 1960s in the ČSSR that was totally different than in the GDR. Among friends in Jena, in view of the developments in the ČSSR, they discussed the concept of socialism at length, and often the question was asked whether what was attempted in Czechoslovakia would have been feasible in the GDR as well. As an opposition activist and editor of the important samizdat publication *radix-blätter*, Ludwig Mehlhorn would primarily be interested in the Polish opposition, but the Prague Spring was one of the three most important reference points to Czechoslovakia. 'We followed the coverage in the western media very attentively, and sympathized with the Prague Spring and hoped that this would also further and introduce a parallel development in the GDR.'[9]

For the so-called generation of the *Aufbaukinder*,[10] it was not only typical that they had their first confrontations with the regime as part of the protests against the invasion of Czechoslovakia, but also that they did not fully grasp the real meaning of the defeat of the Prague Spring until the first half of the 1970s. For example, take Wolfgang Templin who was generally being viewed by the regime even in 1968 as a potential party official. As did many others, he had however welcomed the developments in Czechoslovakia in the second half of the 1960s. In 1967/68 he regularly travelled with friends to East Berlin to see Czech films in the Czech cultural centre. The intervention in August 1968 caught him unprepared. He saw himself as unable to participate in the protest actions. 'I did not want to believe that something like this happened,' Templin explained, who at the time was still under the sway of the official propaganda. Although (as he remembers it) he followed the western media and had compared the information, he still believed in the historical necessity of the invasion. By chance, his life experienced a turning point. In the summer of 1971, while returning from Hungary by way of Czechoslovakia, he entered into a discussion with two young Slovakian women. A few days later by chance he met one of them again in a bookstore. For the next three weeks he intensively discussed with her in Jena the ramifications of the intervention. A year later, he visited her in Slovakia and determined that she regarded

[8] Roland Jahn, interview with Alexander von Plato, 11 Jun. 2008.

[9] The second was his active involvement for the 'Aktion Sühnezeichen', which brought him to the Czech town of Terezin. The third was then the founding of Charter 77 and the subsequent 'Central Europe Debate' in the middle of the 1980s. Ludwig Mehlhorn, interview with the author, Berlin, 26 Apr. 2006.

[10] Annabelle Lutz counts among this generation the birth years 1948–1953. See: Annabelle Lutz, *Dissidenten und Bürgerbewegung: Ein Vergleich zwischen DDR und Tschechoslowakei* (Frankfurt am Main, New York: Campus, 1999), 100 and 150.

the intervention as totally illegitimate. She held that 'it was a brutal counterattack', which he did not want to accept. To expand his horizon, she brought him to a street corner in Bratislava and said: 'This is where my classmates died when confronting the tanks.'[11]

After this experience, he gathered more information about the Prague Spring, such as the works of Jiří Pelikán, Karel Kaplan or Jan Pauer (under the pseudonym Jan Skála). While he was studying in Warsaw in 1976, he apparently found out much more through the Polish samizdat. Some thirty years later, Templin said: 'Today I am convinced that if my contacts or my perception of what happened in ČSSR up to 1968 had been more intensive, then my own development on this issue would have been completely different.'[12]

Ludwig Mehlhorn turned his attention to the reform efforts in Czechoslovakia only after the intervention. As a student in Freiberg at the beginning of the 1970s, he participated in the Protestant Youth Group (*Junge Gemeinde*) and the discussion about different aspects of the Prague Spring. By reading western books on this topic, but also through the developments in Poland in 1975/76 and in the ČSSR in 1976/77, he grasped that only those reform efforts had a chance at success when they originate not just from above, but also from below.[13]

It was primarily the generation born during the second world war which reflected on the Prague Spring. People such as Gerd Poppe, Heiko Lietz, Bernd Eisenfeld, Joachim Gauck, Rainer Eppelmann or Christoph Wonneberger joined up in the 1970s and 1980s with various campaigns that were critical of the regime. For this generation, the year 1968 was among the important events in its life. It left, along with the Hungarian revolution in 1956 and then above all the aftermath in 1961 of the building of the wall, an imprint on the paths of their lives. The distinctiveness of 1968 was (in the opinion of Joachim Gauck) the fact that this time the tanks were sent against a socialist model, which presented a significant difference to 1953 and 1956 when no one wanted to have socialism.[14]

For Gerd Poppe, the Prague Spring had awakened the 'hope for more freedom'. Although the event in Prague was more important for him, at the same time he was also following the remarkable social developments in the west. Thanks to his contacts with the west, he could get the books of Jiří Pelikán or Zdeněk Hejzler in order to learn more about the reform effort.

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[11] Wolfgang Templin, interview with the author, Berlin, 27 Apr. 2006.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ludwig Mehlhorn, interview with the author, Berlin, 26 Apr. 2006.

[14] Joachim Gauck, interview with Alexander von Plato, 6 Feb. 2008.

In addition, for him the Prague Spring was not definitively buried after the intervention, rather it was present for a long time. The 'after effect of the Prague Spring', about which Poppe spoke, is reflected in the memory of Ralf Hirsch (IFM). According to his own statements, he belonged to the generation which had indeed only heard about the Prague Spring, but whose meaning it had nevertheless grasped at least indirectly.[15] Christoph Demke and Markus Meckel responded in a questionnaire that for them Zdeněk Mlynář's *Nightfrost in Prague*[16] was quite important. Demke spent whole nights reading the book, just as he had spent his time in front of the radio ten years earlier in August 1968. Meckel on the other hand, had the book which his friend Reinhard Kähler had given him (who had contacts in Czechoslovakia), taking it as a voucher 'that there are also people in the Communist Party who are capable of learning something'.[17]

So, the Prague Spring did not just help many East Germans have an initial experience of the arbitrariness of the state's power, but it also had a continuing effect after that. In the GDR as well, (in the words of Jaroslav Šabata), as a consequence of the defeat of the Prague Spring, many people recognized that the east bloc actually 'is a space made up of different provinces'.[18] People such as Gerd Poppe had grasped that the Prague Spring had set in motion a search for new forms of opposition, for which (as Jiří Pelikán stated) the initiatives would characteristically come from below.[19]

East German Perceptions of Charter 77

'The publication of Charter 77 was certainly a purely Czechoslovak event. Yet, every word [...] fit the situation in GDR.' This is what Stefan Wolle wrote in his well-known book about the society in the GDR.[20] Despite the

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[15] Ralf Hirsch, interview with the author, Berlin, 24 Jan. 2006.

[16] Intended is the book by Zdeněk Mlynář, *Nightfrost in Prague: The End of Humane Socialism*, trans. Paul Wilson (New York: Karz Publishers, 1980); published in German as *Nachtfrost: Erfahrungen auf dem Weg vom realen zum menschlichen Sozialismus*, trans. Bedřich Uttitz (Cologne, Frankfurt am Main: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, 1978).

[17] Markus Meckel, 'Verbotene Lektüre: Zdeněk Mlynářs "Nachtfrost"', *Horch und Guck* 15, 1 (2006), 22-24, at 23.

[18] Jaroslav Šabata, interview with the author, Brno, 30 Aug. 2007.

[19] Jiří Pelikán, 'Pražské jaro není konec, nýbrž začátek: Ani reforma, ani revoluce – nové cesty ve východní Evropě', *Listy* 8 (Dec. 1978), 44-51.

[20] Stefan Wolle, *Die heile Welt der Diktatur: Alltag und Herrschaft in der DDR 1971–1989* (Bonn: BpB, 1999), 51.

societal differences, which lay chiefly in the previously mentioned 'closeness to the west' and in the special position of the East German Protestant church, very similar social problems existed in both countries, addressed by Charter 77 in its January 1977 'Declaration of Principles'. The arbitrariness of the repressive agents, the restrictions on the right to education, the discrimination against people and the constant violation of human rights all belonged to the everyday life of both the Czechoslovak and East German societies. It is no wonder then that this citizens' initiative attracted the attention of some East German dissidents. In this respect, Ladislav Hejdánek (one of the leading thinkers of Charter 77 and the spokesperson for this citizens' campaign from September 1977 until February 1979 and from June 1979 until January 1980) was not wrong when in 1980 he opined 'that the idea of Charter 77 was also transferable to other countries of the eastern bloc'.[21]

The declaration of Charter 77 in January of 1977 represented a 'minimal program of activity within the framework of current laws'. That struck the regime on a sensitive point. According to Pavel Tigrid, the publisher of the exile newspaper *Svědectví* (Witness), the initiative shifted to the fore the struggle for human rights. Differently than the opposition in the first half of the 1970s, it sought simultaneously both an openness and a re-birth of civil society, a 'citizen's movement of self-help'.[22] It was Petr Uhl, the civil liberties activist and the editor of 'Information about Charter 77' and one of the most active of the Czechoslovak dissidents, who regularly called attention to the active methods of the Polish opposition. But he also endeavoured to report on the development of the East German basis groups as well.[23]

Somewhat over-simplified, the reflection on Charter 77 in the GDR can be divided into two periods. The first one began with the 'Declaration of Principles' from Charter 77 and continued up until the middle of the 1980s. This time was characterized predominantly by attempts of individual persons to borrow a few of the ideas of Charter 77 for the GDR as well. In the

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[21] 'Rozhovor Jiřího Rumla s Ladislavem Hejdánkem' in Ladislav Hejdánek, ed., *Dopisy příteli* (Prague?: s.n., 1980), 39.

[22] Pavel Tigrid, ed., *Vývoj Charty: záznam z konference ve Franken* (Cologne: Opus Bonum, 1981), 129.

[23] He was an actual witness to the second meeting of the preparation group for Charter 77 on 15 December 1976, at which two conceptions for the Charter were discussed. One representative of the reform communists, Pavel Bergman, spoke out for a conception of a committee with firmer membership along the lines of the KOR. However, the supporters of the idea of an open citizens' initiative prevailed Blanka Císařovská, Vilém Prečan, et al., eds., *Charta 77 očima současníků: Po dvaceti letech* (Prague: ÚSD AV ČR and Brno: Doplnék, 1997), 264; Petr Uhl, *Právo a nespravedlnost očima Petra Uhla* (Prague: C. H. Beck, 1998), 26; as well as Petr Uhl, interview with the author, Prague, 30 Jul. 2007.

second period from 1985-1989, the opposition sought to become international and to institutionalize the contacts that it had either created in the first period or to establish some completely anew.

With the tightening of travel restrictions on the leading figures of the East German opposition, it was quite difficult for them starting around 1980 to visit the representatives of Charter 77 in the ČSSR. Personal contacts were as a consequence maintained by post or telephone. An important role was also played by people about whose go-between roles the security service knew nothing or which the service had incorrectly assessed because of sloppiness and ideological blindness.

In addition to this, Czechoslovak expatriates played an extremely important role in the transfer of Charter 77 ideas during both periods. Thanks to their help, information about the citizens' initiatives was published in the western media. German readers, however, could also read the German version of the exile publication *Listy* (Pages) which the Czech expatriate and later politician of the Green Party Milan Horáček began publishing in March 1973.[24] This periodical published both the Declaration of Principles of Chapter 77[25] as well as a letter from West German writers (Heinrich Böll, Friedrich Dürrenmatt, Günter Grass and others), who appealed to the Czech embassy in the Federal Republic because of the arrest in January 1977 of Václav Havel, Jiří Lederer, František Pavlíček and Ota Ornest.[26] In 1973, Czechoslovak emigrants founded the 'Socialist Committee for Eastern Europe' (*Sozialistisches Osteuropakomitee* – SOK). It laboured against the repression in Czechoslovakia and in eastern Europe. In its information journal, the SOK reported on the trials in the ČSSR in the first half of the 1970s and on activities critical of the regime that were forerunners of Charter 77. The issue number 22 from June 1977 was completely dedicated to Charter 77.[27]

And finally, West German media were also an important source of information about the activity of Charter 77. Even though a lot of material made its way directly from the ČSSR to the GDR, the state security service was nevertheless still most often able to quickly shut down such avenues.

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[24] The *Listy-Blätter* did not only report on the repression in the ČSSR, but also on fundamental aspects of normalization. See: 'Die Tradition der "Listy": Zum Erscheinen der deutschsprachigen Ausgabe', *Listy-Blätter* I, 1 (Mar. 1973), 1.

[25] 'Charter 77', *Listy-Blätter* V, 12 (Feb. 1977), 1-2.

[26] 'A Letter to Prague', *Listy-Blätter* V, 12 (Feb. 1977), 8.

[27] 'When we passed out our books about Charter 77 at leftist events, we were often denounced "stooges of the American President Carter," as a member of the editorial team remembers. Mariana Hausleitner, 'Die Stasi hat nicht viel erreicht: Erinnerung an die Arbeit des Westberliner SOK' *Horch und Guck* 10, 2 (2001), 39-41, at 39.

Ludwig Mehlhorn, who himself brought texts out of Poland into the GDR, had, for example, gotten the first of his materials about Charter 77 from the west. At the same time, Rainer Alisch, who was studying theology in Leipzig, provided him directly from Czechoslovakia with the texts of Charter 77. But Alisch was arrested in December 1977; during the search of his home, the state security service found texts from both Rudolf Bahro and Wolf Biermann as well as some material about Charter 77, which he possibly had received from Petr Uhl during his stay in Prague in the summer of 1977.[28] Mehlhorn handed on the material about Charter 77 to Stephan Bickhardt, who made copies of it and distributed them.

As to the genesis of Charter 77, there were several factors that were important.[29] Most authors, however, are of one mind on the fundamental significance of the Helsinki process – the 'Spirit of Helsinki' – in the development of the civil rights campaign in east central Europe. In the opinion of Vilém Prečan, the Final Act from Helsinki contributed to the formation 'of a new basis for the human rights campaigns'.[30] In this respect, the development in the GDR distinguished itself from the situation in the ČSSR. That surely had an effect on the perception of Charter 77.

Comparing the reactions to the Final Act of Helsinki in the ČSSR and the GDR reveals an interesting difference.[31] In the ČSSR, the opposition which was taking form picked up (as a central point in its strategy) on the obligation of the government to take into account questions about human rights. In the GDR, the number of applications for foreign travel rose. 'In the GDR, the people used the Final Act of Helsinki in a rather practical way,' said Ludwig Mehlhorn, in that they appealed to international treaties by which the government had obliged itself to abide.[32] In both countries, however, those in power responded with repressive measures against those challenging the official interpretation of the Helsinki Final Act. In a similar way to how the signers of the Charter 77 were persecuted, many applicants for legal permission to leave the country permanently were persecuted in

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[28] Staatsfeindliche Hetze, Alisch Rainer, sheet 33, HA IX 18701, Ministerium für Staatssicherheit (hereafter: MfS), Bundesbeauftragter für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen Deutschen Demokratischen Republik (hereafter: BStU).

[29] On this topic: Milan Otáhal, *Opoziční proudy v české společnosti 1969-1989* (Prague: ÚSD AV ČR, 2011), 116-152.

[30] Vilém Prečan, 'Občanská práva – centrální problém', *Listy* 7, 3-4 (Jul. 1977), 29.

[31] Further on this topic: Tomáš Vilímek, 'Vnímání helsinského procesu v ČSSR a NDR ze strany moci, opozice a obyvatelstva', in Zdeněk Kárník, Michal Kopeček, eds., *Bolševismus, komunismus a radikální socialismus v Československu,* vol. 5 (Prague: Dokořán, 2005), 275-296 and 376-380.

[32] Ludwig Mehlhorn, interview with the author, Berlin, 26 Apr. 2006.

various ways, even with a prison sentence if the application was branded as hostile to the state.[33]

Although Charter 77 was very important for a number of people in the GDR, it did not present any alternative for the existing power relations in East German society. With a massive campaign against the signers of Charter 77 and their supporters, the security organs made it unambiguously clear what fate would befall the sympathizers. The Prague Spring was perceived as an effort to reform the establishment. Yet the oppositional character of Charter 77 could in this regard hardly be overlooked even though Charter 77 several times declined to take on the role of a political opposition. And actually, in the ČSSR, the open support of Charter 77 was also limited to a minority within the society.[34]

The circle of those in the GDR who took notice of Charter 77 was itself relatively small, even if not insignificant. These people were interested not only in Czechoslovakia; in addition to Charter 77, their horizons were being expanded primarily through the events in Poland at the turn of the years 1980/81. 'Those people who had contact with dissidence in eastern Europe were those who were least caught up in ideological thought patterns. That was also the importance of these contacts,' according to Ulrike Poppe, who among other things would later be involved in the activities of Women for Peace (*Frauen für den Frieden* – FfF) and the IFM.[35] 'We marvelled at Charter 77 and Solidarność, regretting that nothing like that was apparently possible among us Germans who were so obedient to authority,' wrote Markus Meckel, the organizer of the 'mobile peace seminar' and former pastor in Vipperow.[36]

The conversations I have conducted plus other sources provide a number of essential features as to how Charter 77 was perceived in the East German milieu of those critical of the regime. For Mehlhorn, Charter 77 was especially interesting in two regards. Firstly, it presented a convenient opportunity to challenge the regime at its word. Secondly, he found it remarkable that in Charter 77, in spite of different world views, varying

[33] More on this topic, for example, in Hans-Hermann Lochen, Christian Meyer-Seitz, eds., *Die geheimen Anweisungen zur Diskriminierung Ausreisewilliger: Dokumente der Stasi und des Ministeriums des Innern, Texte* (Cologne: Bundesanzeiger, 1992).

[34] In the most recent documentation to Charter 77 the authors provide a total of 1889 signatories. See: 'Soupis signatářů Prohlášení Charty 77', in Blanka Císařovská, Vilém Prečan, et. al., eds., *Charta 77: Dokumenty 1977-1989*, vol. 3 (Prague: ÚSD AV ČR, 2007), 337-378.

[35] 'Protocol of the 68th session', in *Materialien der Enquete-Kommission,* vol. VII/1, 275.

[36] Markus Meckel, *Opposition in der DDR: Zehn Jahre kirchliche Friedensarbeit – Kommentierte Quellentexte* (Cologne: Bund-Verlag, 1994), 68.

streams of thought could work toward common goals. He spoke about three groups: 'Broadly speaking, there were communist reformers, intellectuals and writers, and then the church people.' In connection with the discussions that accompanied the founding of the new Polish opposition groups in 1975/76, it was clear to him that Charter 77 '[represented] another approach, and this approach came from below; the society was not just drawing on liberal rights imparted to it from above, a bit more liberalization, which could later also be withdrawn, but rather it fought for these open spaces itself.'[37]

Reinhard Weißhuhn spoke in this context of Charter 77 functioning as a 'role-model', which he saw both in its relationship to the role of the opposition as well as in its claim to live in truth. In the second half of the 1980s according to Weißhuhn, the European dimension was added to this, setting a framework for discussions about overcoming the confrontation between the two blocs. From the perspective of Charter 77, the partition of Germany represented a key hindrance to improving the situation in Europe.[38] This was an opinion 'that naturally was especially interesting to us, because questions or opinions were being formulated there, which we as Germans – in this case East Germans – would not have formulated in that way, or in all honesty we would not have dared to formulate in that way'.[39]

Gerd Poppe as well busied himself intensely with Charter 77; up until 1979 he was still permitted to travel to Czechoslovakia. In that period he visited Prague several times. One time he met with Petr Uhl and was surprised by the news that Bahro's programmatic writing, *Die Alternative*,

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[37] Ludwig Mehlhorn, interview with the author, Berlin, 26 Apr. 2006.

[38] The Prague Appeal addressed to the 4th European Conference for Nuclear Disarmament (Document of Charter 77 from 11 Mar. 1985) stated: 'We cannot dodge some of what have been taboos. One of them is the partition of Germany. […] We acknowledge for the Germans the open right to determine freely whether and in what form whey want the association of their two states in their present borders.' The German version of this (as used here) comes from Gerd Poppe. He received the translation of the Prague Appeal from the west (along with other texts from the END-Conference in Amsterdam. See: Gerd Poppe, 'Begründung und Entwicklung internationaler Verbindungen', in: Eberhard Kuhrt, *Am Ende des realen Sozialismus 3: Opposition in der DDR von den 70er Jahren bis zum Zusammenbruch der SED-Herrschaft* (Opladen: Leske und Budrich, 1999), 349-377, at 375. The response of the East German oppositionists (primarily the East Berlin scene) from 8 Jun. 1985 (also referred to as the 'Position Paper to the Prague Appeal'), accented the agreement with the Czechoslovak opposition that 'we should use more forcefully than heretofore the CSCE Final Act as an instrument to hold our governments to their word'. They also emphasized that the solution to the German question was only possible in agreement with the other European peoples, and indeed as a 'pan-European agreement'. See: Gerd Poppe, 'Begründung und Entwicklung', 376. See to this also the contribution of Kacper Szulecki in this volume.

[39] Reinhard Weißhuhn, interview with the author, Berlin, 25 Apr. 2006.

had been translated into Czech. During his trips to Hungary, Poland, and ČSSR he determined that many oppositionists in these countries had freed themselves from reformist visions of a socialist alternative, even though some of them had formerly been Marxists. He had been astonished that in the GDR, people still believed in such reformist concepts. 'That was, however, totally illusory and pointless; it was only possible to create parallel societal structures, something which was already being discussed intensively in Poland, and fighting in this way to win some political latitude. Such reflections were not new to us, but in the GDR they were by far much less developed,' is how Poppe remembered it.[40] In 2001 he said: 'What I found especially important in the developments in Poland and the ČSSR was the fact that the opposition abandoned being in a closed circle and instead expressed itself publically; something comparable was what I wished for in the GDR.'[41]

This same kind of catching up is what Ralf Hirsch of the IFM wanted. In his opinion, the contacts with Charter 77 came into being so late, because there had been no true opposition for such a long time in the GDR. 'We lacked symbolic figures and structures,' Hirsch said. Further to this, Hirsch answered the question as to what he found especially important in Charter 77 in this way:

> For us the main point was the theme of human rights. There were enough peace discussions among us, and they were also desirable [...], but the topic of human rights violations in our own country...that was what convinced us.[42]

Matthias Domaschk as well later attempted to enter into contact with like-minded people in Czechoslovakia and Poland, because he missed having an effective human rights group in the GDR.'[43] Although Wolfgang Templin said that it was only through a confrontation with the Polish Workers' Defence Committee (*Komitet Obrony Robotników*, KOR) during his time of studying in Poland (1976/77) 'that [he] got an idea of how a democratic opposition could and must look like in a dictatorial system',[44] he pointed

[40] Gerd Poppe, interview with the author, Berlin, 22 Nov. 2007.

[41] 'Das freie Wort war die schärfste Waffe der Opposition': Roundtable discussion on 3 April 2001, Matthias Domaschk Archive, Berlin', in Ilko-Sascha Kowalczuk and Tom Sello, eds., *Für ein freies Land mit freien Menschen: Opposition und Widerstand in Biographien und Fotos* (Berlin: Robert-Havemann-Gesellschaft, 2006), 106.

[42] Ralf Hirsch, interview with the author, Berlin, 24 Jan. 2006.

[43] Gerold Hildebrand, 'Matthias Domaschk: Eine turbulente und unvollendete Jugend in Jena', *Horch und Guck* 12, Sondernummer 1 (2003), 13.

[44] Eckhard Jesse, ed., *Eine Revolution und ihre Folgen: 14 Bürgerrechtler ziehen Bilanz* (Berlin: Ch. Links, 2000), 113.

out in a conversation that the influence of Charter 77 on him had in fact been much stronger than that of the Polish opposition.[45]

The leadership of the Protestant Church in the GDR made an effort to channel the human rights debate in the GDR; many of them still had in mind the death of Oskar Brüsewitz, who had set himself on fire in August 1976 as a protest against the GDR regime. Nevertheless, there were also pastors and theologians who were willing to hazard a confrontation with church leadership. They sought to link up the fight over human rights with the one about the freedom of the individual. The activities of Heino Falcke or Hans-Joachim Fränkel witnessed the existence of a 'rights and human rights tradition' as one of two Protestant groundswells, which (in Ehrhart Neubert's opinion) influenced the GDR opposition.[46]

Clearly the best known example for the reception of Charter 77 in the church milieu was the activity of Vicar Günther Schau. He was the one who sought programmatically to get into contact with the human rights movements in east central Europe. In March 1977 he visited the widow of Jan Patočka in Prague to express his condolences. One week after this trip, he was arrested and in autumn 1977 he was deported to the Federal Republic. A group of theology students from Naumburg – Lothar Tautz, Christian Radeke and Bernhard Klose – documented the actions of the MfS and involved themselves in the preparation of the 'Querfurt Paper' of April 1977 in which the demand was raised to abide by the obligations in the Final Act from Helsinki. 'It is only where plurality is kept in mind that people will gladly be citizens of their country,'[47] is how it read in the paper that the MfS designated as 'The Charter of the GDR'.[48] It was in this context that the state security police (*Stasi*) asked the Czechoslovak security organs to keep tabs on a meeting between Günther Schau und Christian Radeke in Karlsbad in January 1978; both persons were 'under the suspicion […] that they would be passing on anti-socialist materials about the arrested persons in the GDR'.[49] Jaroslav Šabata also took note of the

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[45] Wolfgang Templin, interview with the author, Berlin, 27 Apr. 2006.

[46] The second one is 'Protestant Social Ethics'. See: Ehrhart Neubert, 'Christen, Schutzdächer und der Geist des Protestantismus', in Kowalczuk and Sello, *Für ein freies Land*, 185-192, at 185. In addition: Ehrhart Neubert, *Geschichte der Opposition in der DDR 1949–1989* (Bonn: Ch. Links, 1997), 251-255 and 257-266.

[47] Lothar Tautz, Christian Radeke, "*Warte nicht auf bessere Zeiten…": Oskar Brüsewitz, Wolf Biermann und die Protestbewegung in der DDR 1976-1977, Dokumentation* (Halle/Saale: Mitteldeutscher Verlag, 1999), 137.

[48] Schwerpunkte der monatlichen Berichterstattungen für Juni/Juli 1977, 24 Aug. 1977, sheet 147, HA XX/AKG 116, BStU.

[49] Einleitung politisch-operativer Maßnahmen durch die Sicherheitsorgane der ČSSR, 20 Jan. 1978, sheets 41-42, HA XX/4 Nr. 423, BStU.

'Querfurt Paper' and understood it as an 'attempt to transfer Charter 77 as a model of a proclamation or appeal onto the circumstances in East Germany.'[50] If Bahro's *Alternative* had been a response to the year 1968, then the 'Querfurt Paper' could be seen – as Ilko-Sascha Kowalczuk has argued – as 'an early reaction in the GDR to Charter 77'.[51]

As mentioned earlier, Charter 77 had been considered for the most part in connection with the developments in Poland and Hungary. Questions now arose for the East Germans about their own actual situation, about the similarities with and differences of dissidence in the GDR in comparison to their east central European colleagues. According to Gerd Poppe, the power structures in all the individual countries of the east bloc were generally similar; what was special for the residents of the GDR, however, was the existence of a second German state. Reinhard Weißhuhn saw

> a specifically German phenomenon on account of the permanent, direct face-off with the Federal Republic. […] We had great difficulties in going quite so far, even to think about going so far, which in Prague or Budapest or Warsaw was not such a problem. We would have landed in Bonn, been in Bonn immediately, and we could not want that, because that is what the SED wanted.

He mentioned (just as Ralf Hirsch or Gerd Poppe had) the significantly sharper judgments concerning activities critical of the regimes in east central Europe and he named specifically the negative consequences of the deportation practices of the East German bodies, because of which there was never 'a continuity in the opposition' in the GDR.[52] A few Czechoslovak dissidents recognized this specific aspect of the GDR. Anna Šabatová said: 'It must have been very difficult to have to start over again and again.'[53]

The emergence of citizens' movements in east central Europe starting in the middle of the 1970s had, as a result, awakened in some East German oppositionists the need to think more carefully about their own methods and goals. Wolfgang Templin, for example, had noted that in Poland there were substantially more people who had left a leftist ideology behind. The societal situation, a certain 'paralysis of the society', in his opinion, was typical for the ČSSR and GDR, whereas the Polish society had shown a greater viability and a longing for freedom.[54]

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[50] Jaroslav Šabata, interview with the author, Brno, 30 Aug. 2007.

[51] Ilko-Sascha Kowalczuk, 'Der Prager Frühling in der DDR 1969-1989: Ein Essay', *Horch und Guck* 16, 2 (2007), 6-9, at 7.

[52] Reinhard Weißhuhn, interview with the author, Berlin, 25 Apr. 2006.

[53] Roland Jahn, interview with Alexander von Plato, 11 Jun. 2008.

[54] Wolfgang Templin, interview with the author, Berlin, 27 Apr. 2006.

The combination of the 'continuing impulses from outside' strongly influenced Reinhard Weißhuhn, who sought to convey the outlines of the Hungarian debate to the GDR, without however always being successful in doing so. Not everyone shared his conviction that 'socialism [was] out'. He admired the analyses of György Konrád, Miklós Haraszti or György Dalos, who turned the socialism that really existed on its head in that they conducted its ideological claim to an *ad absurdum*. Comparing the Hungarian texts with Bahro's *Alternative*, Weißhuhn said: 'Bahro as it were has always analysed only in a system-immanent fashion and his book is therefore nothing more than a pleasant, totally romantic utopia.' In addition to the Hungarian texts, he was influenced by Václav Havel's essay 'The Power of the Powerless', which took up the theme of life in truth. Weißhuhn meant that 'in Czechoslovakia, what dominated most likely – just as it was with us – was a continuous, practical schizophrenia' in which one was challenged to discover the false in the correct, the true in what was lied about. In this sense, Havel posed the 'existential question'.[55]

Ralf Hirsch, Ludwig Mehlhorn and Gerd Poppe also alluded to a certain learning process. 'It was only with the help of the *Grenzfall* [an East German samizdat journal, P.J.] that we tried to build up an oppositional public sphere in the GDR,' is what Hirsch said, who in his visit to Prague at the end of December 1985 had spoken with Petr Uhl and Anna Šabatová about the form of this samizdat newspaper and about the possibility of adopting the institution of spokesperson (used by Charter 77) for the emerging IFM as well. They had counselled him to publicize succinct information about the repression in the GDR. According to Hirsch, the inspiration for open letters (as, for example, an appeal to the United Nations Year of Peace from January 1986) also came from the ČSSR. Hirsch recollected:

> What I quite clearly understood in my conversations with Uhl and Šabatová was that we had to find a language which the people would understand. If we wanted to achieve solidarity from below, we also had to name in short and concise and precise ways what and why, and not to publish texts which no person could understand.[56]

Because direct and personal contacts with people who thought differently in the east bloc countries were only possible with great difficulty, Mehlhorn rejected the term 'collaboration' to characterise his relations with the Czechoslovak opposition. In his opinion the above-mentioned 'learning process' was more important anyways. 'We were truly the ones learning,

[55] Reinhard Weißhuhn, interview with the author, Berlin, 25 Apr. 2006.

[56] Ralf Hirsch, interview with the author, Berlin, 24 Jan. 2006.

transferring something to their own situation' is what Mehlhorn said, for whom, however, the most intense inspiration was coming from Poland.[57]

It was at the end of the 1970s (at the latest) that there were people in the GDR who were delving into the possibilities for the opposition, considering among them the ideas of Charter 77, of KOR and later of Solidarność. Robert Havemann was one of the most important advocates of this new orientation. Furthermore, the emergence of the IFM showed the clear influence of Charter 77.

> This [the IFM, T.V.] was quite in the style of the Charter, even if with a much smaller flame. There were three spokespersons and communiqués about the important political events, which were done with the help of journalists or good friends in the west, as well as the release of underground publications which were produced in archaic ways,

is how Gerd Poppe recounted it during a panel discussion. In his opinion, the civil rights activists from the ČSSR and Poland contributed importantly to the fact that 'we distanced ourselves from the "boxes" of left and right.'[58] As the international collaboration of opposition groups in east central Europe intensified, this had an impact on the East German opposition too. In 1985 a 'contact group for Charter 77' came together.[59] The MfS dated the formation of this group to October 1985 and emphasized Bärbel Bohley's special role.[60]

At a meeting of the political underground in the GDR on 9 October 1985 – according to a different report of the MfS – suggestions from Prague were discussed, for example, the preparation of a joint paper on the question of conscientious objection and a discussion of the goals for an independent peace movement in the GDR.[61] According to the historian

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[57] Ludwig Mehlhorn, interview with the author, Berlin, 26 Apr. 2006.

[58] 'Der Prager Frühling 1968 und seine Folgen in der ČSSR, in den sozialistischen Nachbarländern, insbesondere in der DDR und der VR Polen, sowie im Ost-West-Verhältnis', in Jansen, *Materialien*, 148 and 182.

[59] This group is mentioned in Neubert, *Geschichte,* 596. Gerd Poppe commented that this had to do with different meetings with varying groupings instead of a continuous working group, which the MfS apparently assumed. Subsequently, it was primarily the IFM that concerned itself with contacts with Charter 77. Gerd Poppe, interview with the author, Berlin, 22 Nov. 2007.

[60] Aktuelle Erfahrungen und Erkenntnisse bei der Bekämpfung feindlich-negativer Kräfte und Gruppierungen politischer Untergrundtätigkeit in der Hauptstadt, 15 Sept. 1986, OV 'Blauvogel' Ralf Hirsch, Volume 4-6 Sections 1/85-6/87, 22 sheets, here sheet 11, MDA-RHG.

[61] There one also finds a list of people who were supposed to belong to what was called the Contact Group – GDR for collaboration with Charter 77: Stephan Bickhardt, Martin Böttger, Gerd Poppe, Ludwig Mehlhorn, Thomas Klein, Wolfgang Templin, Wolfram

Thomas Klein, the majority of the participants in this project in the following years built the main 'human rights wing' of the East German opposition. At the turn of the year in 1985/86, the IFM finally emerged, making no secret of the influence on it of Charter 77.

It is appropriate to conclude that the human rights question in the GDR gained in importance thanks to contacts with the opposition in the neighbouring countries. A part of the East German opposition drew near to the oppositional spectrum in the ČSSR or Poland. From the middle of the 1980s, the regime critics in the east bloc discussed topics with one another and attempted to protect one another from repression through actions of solidarity.

Czechoslovak Perceptions of the Regime-Critical Forces in East Central Europe and the Soviet Union: Poland as the Most Important Partner

Jan Tesař wrote in his analysis of the activity of Charter 77 at the beginning of 1978:

> We must become aware of how enormously important it is to internationalize our struggle. It is surely the most important thing of all. [...] The principle direction of our interests should be the Poles.

Tesař was a Czech historian, a signatory of Charter 77 and co-founder of the Committee for the Defence of Those Unjustly Persecuted (*Výbor na obranu nespravedlivě stíhaných, VONS*).[62] For the Czechoslovak dissidents, the relationships with their Polish colleagues were among the most important and stable. What played a positive role in that were their kindred languages, the massive reach of the Polish underground press called the 'second circulation', but also the fact that the Czechoslovak side was much better informed about the Polish opposition, which it considered as fundamentally stronger and more active. So it was not a surprise that dissidents from both countries met one another for the first time in the summer of 1978 on the Czech-Polish border. In a joint statement following the meeting (which was broadcast in August of the same year on Radio Free Europe), they declared their solidarity with all the civil rights activists in eastern Europe.

Tschiche and others. See: ZOV (Zentraler operativer Vorgang) 'Zirkel' Gerd und Ulrike Poppe, Ordner 4, vol. 21, 133-134, MDA-RHG.

[62] Jan Tesař, 'Analýza Jana Tesaře, jak dále rozvíjet činnost Charty 77 a intenzivní komunikaci s veřejností, březen 1978', in Císařovská and Prečan, *Charta 77*, vol. 3, 256.

Among the political prisoners listed was also Rudolf Bahro. The statement ended with the words:

> Today our peoples are linked more strongly than ever by a common fate. It is, therefore, all the more important that those who have campaigned for a betterment of that fate should attempt to join up their forces.[63]

Interest in opposition movements in the states of the Warsaw Pact grew among the majority of the Czechoslovak dissidents out of a desire to be informed about the developments in all the countries of the east bloc. In this way the 'provincial naïveté' could be averted, something which Zdeněk Mlynář had warned against in April 1979.[64] Many people compared the situation of their neighbours with the one in their own country and thought about the possibility of cooperating. Petr Pithart, who was inspired primarily by British conservatism, recounted: 'I have always compared and sought to grasp why it was different for us than in Poland or Hungary.'[65] Contacts were for the most part random, but always served to provide information, too. Whether someone preferred one country depended mostly on his language abilities. What also played a role was whether the contacts were made during the time when the border was not yet closed for the persons involved.

What was also important was naturally the extent to which the dissidence in a country was viewed as inspiring or even as a role-model. In the ČSSR, the Polish opposition was in the key position. Other contacts were made with the Hungarian and East German opposition. The Soviet dissidents were perceived primarily through the texts of say Andrei Sakharov, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn or Lev Kopelev. Relatively well-known as well were the 'Seven Courageous Ones',[66] who had to serve prison sentences because they had protested in Moscow in August 1968 against the intervention.

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[63] Společný dopis Charty 77 a polského Výboru společenské sebeobrany (KSS-KOR) obráncům lidských práv ve východní Evropě a SSSR, 27.7.1978, in Císařovská and Prečan, *Charta 77*, vol. 1, 161.

[64] Pavel Tigrid, ed., *Vývoj Charty*, 54.

[65] Petr Pithart, interview with the author, Prague, 6 Jun. 2007.

[66] On 25 August 1968, the Soviet citizens Konstantin Babicky, Vadim Delaunay, Vladimir Dremliuga, Viktor Fainberg, Natalya Gorbanevskaya, Pavel Litvinov, Larisa Bogoraz and Tatiana Baeva staged a protest against the invasion of Czechoslovakia carrying banners with slogans like 'Long live free Czechoslovakia!' or 'Hands off Czechoslovakia!' Although they demonstrated peacefully and even made a conscious effort not to disturb the public peace the protestors were arrested and seven of them (the seven courageous ones) – all but Gorbanevskaya who had recently given birth – were sentenced to 2-3 years in prison, life-long exile or had to undergo therapy in a psychiatric ward.

Asked about his relationships with the independent initiatives in the east bloc, the representative of the Catholic dissidence, Václav Malý, responded:

> We followed it, but it must be said that contacts to the peace movements, for example, in the GDR were quite sporadic. Their attention was primarily turned in the direction of the Federal Republic, naturally, sharing the same language as they did. So, at the time there was no closer connection with the initiatives in the GDR. An intensive collaboration, however, came about with the Poles. People who were not known to the state security service travelled to Poland, and they then brought back literature. […] In the 1980s there was also official contact between the representatives of Solidarność and Charter 77 and also the well-known border meetings. The contacts with Hungary were just sporadic.[67]

This assessment confirms not only the importance of the Polish opposition for the regime critics in the ČSSR, but also at the same time shows how differently the opposition in the east bloc states were perceived individually. Malý had plainly not belonged to those circles who maintained contacts in the GDR; moreover, he had not noticed that in Slovakia, for example, good relations existed between the representatives of the Hungarian minority located there and Hungary itself. Nor were the regime critics in East Germany fixated on the Federal Republic, even though the presence of the stronger, democratic neighbour certainly influenced the opposition in the GDR. Being moulded by one's own experience was natural.

Interest in the opposition in the east bloc influenced as well the estimation of their strengths and their social importance. The activities of the KOR and later of Solidarność, as well as the continually palpable readiness for resistance by the Polish population, drew the attention of the Czechoslovak opposition toward Poland. In the GDR, many opposition members were confident in the strengths of both the Polish and Czechoslovak opposition. Looked at today, one can say that the strength of the Czechoslovak opposition was overestimated in the GDR, whereas the opposition in the GDR was underestimated in the ČSSR. Ladislav Hejdánek recounted: 'The Poles were quite inspiring for us, and now and then, they did things which we could emulate.'[68] Dana Němcová, the spokesperson of Charter 77 in 1989 and who through her husband, Jiří Němec, had had contacts back in the middle of the 1950s with Poland, recounted:

> But Poland meant a lot to us. Not just what had to do with the free culture that dominated there back in 1955/56, where Camus would be performed, but it was

[67] Václav Malý, interview with David Weber, 13 Apr. 2004, Sbírka Rozhovory, Center for Oral History, Institute for Contemporary History, Prague (hereafter: COH, ÚSD).

[68] Ladislav Hejdánek, interview with the author, Písek, 28 Aug. 2007.

> there that we saw the first films from Fellini and it was from there that we brought back all kinds of things, because in Poland you could buy émigré journals at kiosks.[69]

As already mentioned, meetings on the Polish-Czechoslovak border in the Karkonosze/Krkonoše Mountains between the representatives of the opposition movements from both countries had taken place in the late 1970s. At the beginning of the 1980s, these relationships were even institutionalized with the founding of the Polish-Czechoslovak solidarity, which intensified its activity after 1984. The arrest of Petr Pospíchal and the subsequent wave of solidarity in Poland contributed critically to the emergence of the Circle of Friends of the Polish-Czechoslovak Solidarity (*Kruh přátel Polsko-Československé solidarity*) on 6 June 1987. Participating in the collaboration on the side of Charter 77 were, among others, Anna Šabatová, Petr Uhl and not least of all Tomáš Petřivý and Ján Čarnogurský.[70] In the opinion of Čarnogurský, the social conditions in Poland compared most closely with those in Czechoslovakia. What was certainly reflected in this regard of the Polish society was the Catholic character of the Slovak dissidence for which the stance of the Polish Catholic church represented a natural reference point. Čarnogurský participated many times in the border meetings with the Polish regime critics. He reported: 'We met once a year, [and] talked about the projects we could undertake together. They [the Poles, T.V.] now and then came up with suggestions that simply went too far for us.' As an example, toward the end of the 1980s, the Polish side offered a device with which official radio transmissions could be interrupted and be replaced with one's own critical explanation and commentary.[71] The Czech side received a similar offer from Miroslav Jasińsky and Jarek Broda.[72] 'The Poles did not really know what was actually going on for us,' is what František Mikloško said. At the same time he pointed out the Polish help for religious orders in Czechoslovakia.[73]

People like Alexandr Vondra or Petr Pospíchal, who were active in the Polish-Czechoslovak solidarity, also regarded as very important the technical help from Poland on the production of the Czech samizdat. František Stárek, the publisher of the underground newspaper *Vokno* (Window), made contact with the Polish newspaper *Puls* and attempted to set up a link

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[69] Dana Němcová, interview with Ilona Christl, Sbírka lidé Charty 77, COH, ÚSD.

[70] Beginning in July 1988, this circle of friends published an information bulletin. See: *Informační bulletin Polsko-Československé solidarity* 1, 1 (1988), 1-3.

[71] Ján Čarnogurský, interview with the author, Bratislava, 27 Jun. 2008.

[72] Petr Uhl and Anna Šabatová, interview with the author, Prague, 4 Jan. 2010.

[73] František Mikloško, interview with the author, Bratislava, 26 Jun. 2008.

among the underground papers of Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, and Lithuania. The state security service foiled his attempt.[74] Huge amounts of literature were acquired from Poland. Civil rights activist and political prisoner Rudolf Battěk read sociological treatises of American authors that had been translated into Polish.[75] In Czech samizdat periodicals, there were texts from Adam Michnik and Jacek Kuroń, and even the spokesperson for Charter 77 from 1980, Miloš Rejchrt, admitted that it was indeed the translations of the books of Adam Michnik or Tadeusz Konwicki ('A Small Apocalypse') which expanded his horizons, although he otherwise by his own account followed the events in Poland only out of 'a dissident's obligation'.[76] The priest, Rudolf Smahel, who had studied theology in Erfurt in 1985, remembered that he was able to import into the ČSSR religious texts that were intended 'for church use only'. Similar literature could be brought back either from Poland (Catholic) or from the GDR (Protestant).[77]

Forces Critical of the Regime in the DDR from the Perspective of the Czechoslovak Opposition

The claim is controversial that in the eyes of the Czechs, the East Germans were all similarly 'pig-headed, naïve, patriotic, religious and – not just ideologically – a bit dumb'.[78] Adolf Müller wrote in *Listy* (Pages) about 'a deep antipathy of almost all Czechs and Slovaks toward the Prussian socialism in the GDR,' an attitude that was significantly strengthened by the participation of the GDR in the intervention of August 1968. These *Dederonáci* (something like GDRers), in Müller's words, were unpopular

[74] František Stárek, inteview with the author, Prague, 21 Apr. 2008.

[75] Rudolf Battěk, interview with the author, Prague, 3 May 2007.

[76] Miloš Rejchrt, interview with the author, Prague, 12 Feb. 2008.

[77] Rudolf Smahel, interview with Pavel Urbášek, 5 May 2003, Sbírka Rozhovory, COH, ÚSD.

[78] Jan Faktor and Annette Simon, eds., *Fremd im eigenen Land?* (Gießen: Psychosozial-Verlag, 2000), 43-44. The Czech writer Jan Faktor who lived in the GDR from 1978 on pointed out that he and the Czechs had tremendously erred in this assessment of the GDR. One of the errors (in his opinion) was about the co-existence of the peoples. Faktor had participated in many home readings of the underground literature scene in East Berlin (for example, in the flat of Gerd Poppe). He was married to Annette Simon, the daughter of the writer Christa Wolf. The dossier of the StB and state security service for Faktor and Wolf, 'double tongued' (*Obojetník*), had the goal 'of preventing their efforts to unite the opposition forces in the ČSSR and the DDR'. Přehled agenturně operativních opatření k zájmovým osobám na léta 1987–1990, December 1986, sheet 3, No. 232, fond SB/MS, Archiv bezpečnostnich složek (hereafter: ABS ČR).

everywhere, probably for the reason 'that they held up a mirror to every little Czech citizen'.[79] The modest level of information which most citizens had about the happenings in the GDR – with the exception of a relatively small group of people with personal relationships, language abilities, or the conviction that the east central European dissidents had to cooperate with one another – stood in contrast to the interest with which the events in Czechoslovakia (1968 or 1977/78) were followed in East Germany.

'The oppositionist forces in every country in the east bloc were burdened with local problems' is what the historian Vilém Prečan said at the meeting about the collaboration of democratic forces in east central Europe at the beginning of November 1989 in Warsaw.[80] Such 'preoccupation with one's self' certainly strained the contacts. Some representatives of the opposition, who engaged themselves with all their strength in various actions in their own country, (for example, Petruška Šustrová, the active member of VONS) had little time left over. 'We could not let ourselves be inspired from just anywhere, we had enough inspiration at home,' commented Jiří Dienstbier, who however followed the developments in the other east bloc states, primarily in Poland, Hungary and in the Soviet Union.[81]

In Czechoslovakia, primarily those East German dissidents gained attention who between 1977–1978 and 1987–1989 got into conflict with the regime. Surely the best known case was Rudolf Bahro, whose *Alternative* even appeared in two editions of Czech samizdat.[82] This was a work that Charter 77 in July 1977 designated as a 'critical analysis of the social system of the GDR and of eastern European countries'.[83] The book generated discussions in the west and east, but it was not received just positively. One could even argue that the book awakened more interest among the euro-communists in the west than in the east.[84] For instance, Rudi Dutschke

[79] Adolf Müller, 'Co se děje v Německu', *Listy* 8, 2 (Apr. 1978), 38-42, at 38.

[80] Vilém Prečan, *V kradeném case: Výběr ze studií, článků a úvah z let 1973-1993* (Prague: ÚSD AV ČR and Brno: Doplnék, 1994), 170.

[81] Jiří Dienstbier, interview with the author, Prague, 26 May 2008.

[82] In the 'Libri prohibiti', one finds two versions of Bahro's *Alternative* from the Czech samizdat. In the first one, there is an almost two hundred page abstract. Jaroslav Suk translated more than two thirds of it. The second, an almost five hundred page version, is complete and came from the Brno circle around Jiří Müller. Milan Jelínek did the translation.

[83] 'Sdělení o odsouzení východoněmeckého filozofa a ekonoma Rudolfa Bahra, 22.7. 1978', in: Císařovská and Prečan, *Charta 77*, vol. 1, 160.

[84] Yet in the GDR, reading circles arose in which the *Alternative* was discussed from various points of view.

criticized Bahro for underestimating the importance of human rights.[85] He judged as unrealistic the way that Bahro proposed a better communism by way of what was called the 'League of Communists', just as Jiří Pelikán had in his review of *Die Alternative* in October 1979.[86] Although Pelikán saw the book more positively and shared above all Bahro's assessment 'that the sensitive point of any oppositional conception lies in national limitedness,' he at the same time criticized Bahro's belief in the 'mystical calling' of communists.[87] 'The book ran counter to the Czech oppositional milieu that set itself more and more clearly in opposition to the socialist alternatives' was what Jaroslav Šabata said, for whom Bahro had been an 'age-old socialist'.[88]

More than the book itself, what aroused attention in Czechoslovakia were the reports about the repressive measures taken against Bahro. Shortly after his arrest, a 'Committee for the Freeing of Rudolf Bahro' was established in West Berlin. In November, what was called the 'Bahro Congress' took place there, where (among others) Jiří Pelikán and Ludvík Kavín represented the Czechoslovak side. Almost 2000 interested parties heard presentations in three sections.[89] At the beginning of November 1978, Charter 77 and VONS wrote a joint letter to the congress in which, in addition to expressing their outrage at the conviction of Bahro, they also expressed their belief 'that the repression, which intended to isolate the one who had freely expressed an idea, will ultimately be turned against those who wanted to muzzle him'.[90] Above all, it was Petr Uhl who took part in the Czechoslovak solidarity action for Bahro. The development of Bahro's case was also followed in the later issues of *Listy* (Pages).

The Czechoslovak dissidents also gave special attention to Robert Havemann. But differently than with Bahro, none of his books had been translated into Czech. Only those who knew German could discuss his writings. Yet all the more were the reports attended to about the harass-

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[85] Guntolf Herzberg and Kurt Seifert, eds., *Rudolf Bahro: Glaube an das Veränderbare – Eine Biographie* (Berlin: Ch. Links, 2002), 229.

[86] Jiří Pelikán, 'Možnosti a cesty změn reálného socialismu: Nad knihou "Alternativa" Rudolfa Bahra', *Listy* 9, 5 (Oct. 1979), 21-26, at 25.

[87] Ibid., 24.

[88] Jaroslav Šabata, interview with the author, Brno, 30 Aug. 2007.

[89] Of the former GDR citizens who participated in the congress, Wolf Biermann or Jürgen Fuchs can be mentioned. The complete program appeared in the information booklet of the Socialist Eastern Europe Committee. 'Umbruch in Osteuropa – die sozialistische Alternative: Internationaler Kongreß für Rudolf Bahro', *Sozialistisches Osteuropakomitee – Zeitschrift für sozialistische Theorie und Praxis* 30 (1978), 21-23.

[90] 'Dopis Charty 77 a VONS mezinárodnímu kongresu v západním Berlíně na obranu Rudolfa Bahra, 6.11.1978', in Císařovská and Prečan, *Charta 77*, vol. 1, 181.

ment to which he was exposed. Anna Šabatová remembered a meeting with Havemann's daughter, Sibylle Havemann, in Petruška Šustrová's flat when she informed those present about the house arrest of her father. 'Thanks to this meeting, we knew about the regime that had been imposed on Havemann,' Šabatová said, who was aware that these repressive measures were similar to those which she and her husband had been exposed to between September 1977 and May 1979. Back then, two uniformed policemen sat in front of the door of her flat, checking every person who wanted to visit the Uhl family.[91]

The 'Socrates from Grünheide' – as Havemann was called – was primarily perceived as an intellectual who made no secret of his criticism of the social conditions in East Germany. 'The texts from Havemann had no real relevance for me, nevertheless, he was (along with Milovan Đilas) one of those authors who belonged in the library of dissidence,' is what Jaroslav Šabata said.[92] Yet, it was Havemann especially who would have been the desired discussion partner about overcoming the bloc if he could have lived to see the time of the Prague Appeal in March 1985. Jiří Dienstbier, who in his book *Träumen über Europa* refers to Havemann multiple times, saw him as 'an example of dissent within the SED, and that was what interested us so much, because after 1956 it was quite clear to us that we could accomplish something only within the framework of the party'.[93]

Naturally, many Czechoslovak dissidents also paid attention to the songwriter Wolf Biermann, who had his GDR citizenship revoked in November 1976 while in the FRG. It is difficult to reconstruct the extent to which his story was known in the ČSSR. His criticism of the intervention in August 1968 and above all his songs (which in comparison to the complicated and theoretical texts of Bahro or Havemann were much more accessible) created some interest. In Petr Uhl's room hung a poster of Biermann as well as his song lyric about a red Prague, which Uhl had received as a present from Sibylle Plogstedt.[94] In Uhl's opinion 'with

[91] Anna Šabatová, interview with the author, 10 Aug. 2007 and Oct. 2006.

[92] Jaroslav Šabata, interview with the author, Brno, 30 Aug. 2007.

[93] Jiří Dienstbier, interview with the author, Prague, 26 May 2008.

[94] As a West German student of sociology, Plogstedt had come to Prague in the summer of 1968. She was a close friend of Uhl. Together they participated in the founding of the 'Movement of Revolutionary Youth' (Hnutí revoluční mládeže - HRM) for which she was arrested in 1969 and sentenced to two and a half years in prison. More on this interesting story can be found in her book: Sibylle Plogstedt, *Im Netz der Gedichte: Gefangen in Prag nach 1968* (Berlin: Ch. Links, 2001).

Biermann it was about a person who was quite close to me politically'.[95] As to the reaction of the East German intellectuals to the news of Biermann's being exiled and the massive wave of arrests in Jena, the Uhl family was informed by Renate Ellmenreich und Mathias Domaschk. Ellmenreich remembered: 'We sat there then for three days and nights, recounting the severe repression that we had experienced in Jena, and Petr and Hanka took turns writing the whole history down in order to make a Charter document out of it.'[96]

Awareness of the GDR in Czechoslovakia remained limited to a relatively small circle. The events of June 1953 or the construction of the Berlin Wall in August 1961 evoked only sporadic interest. However, at the latest, from the middle of the 1970s on, the developments in the GDR were attended to more closely. What contributed to that was a conviction as to the importance of mutual solidarity and the exchange of information. The refugee movement then of 1989 also elicited greater response in the ČSSR. For the majority of the affected, the thousands of East Germans in the vicinity of the West German embassy proved that the system in the GDR had major problems. 'Undoubtedly, the actual political situation in the GDR had caused this disruption of normalcy. The disappointed hopes for reform and the uncertainty about leaving the country had resulted in spontaneous reactions from the citizens that often were not well considered,' was what Charter 77 wrote in September 1989 about the wave of those leaving the country.[97]

In Czechoslovakia some specific aspects of the East German dissidence received particular attention. Anna Šabatová described one of them succinctly:

> It was not common in Czechoslovakia (as it was in the GDR) that a political prisoner, after signing a declaration of consent to emigrate, would be shipped off immediately with the whole family to the west. It was in this way that the East German opposition was being virtually liquidated.[98]

Šabatová saw quite clearly the missing continuity in the East German dissidence and the deportation policy of the SED regime which was using the Federal Republic as 'a form of an upscale Siberia' in order to gag its opponents. 'Today there are more peace activists from Jena in West Berlin

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[95] Petr Uhl, interview with the author, Prague, 5 Nov. 2006.

[96] Liebermann et al., *Dissidenten*, 40.

[97] 'Dokument Charty 77 Nr. 56, 14.9.1989: K otázce východoněmeckých uprchlíků', *Informace o Chartě 77*, 17 (1989), 2.

[98] Anna Šabatová, interview with the author, Prague, 10 Aug. 2007.

than there are in Jena,' is what Timothy Garton Ash wrote in 1986.[99] According to information from the MfS, Gerd Poppe, in connection with an action that Anna Šabatová had painstakingly organized, tells of a telephone conversation in which Šabatová complained about the lack of perseverance on the part of the East German activists. It concerned a 'Joint Declaration about Repression in the GDR' in February 1988 which had been prepared in reaction to a wave of arrests after a demonstration in East Berlin in January 1988. 'A week in a frenzy, all we did was make telephone calls, and when we finally went public with the declaration, we discovered that they [Werner Fischer, Bärbel Bohley, Ralf Hirsch, the married couple Templin and other members of the IFM T.V.] had left the country,' is how Šabatová remembered it.[100]

Petr Uhl was certainly one of the best informed Czechoslovak dissidents as to what had to do with the situation in the GDR. Although, in his opinion, the GDR had only gained in importance for the Czechoslovak side as a consequence of the intervention in August 1968, he worked to set up information networks.[101] He had arranged with Ralf Hirsch that the 'Information about Charter 77' be sent by way of the Federal Republic into the GDR. In order to enhance the exchange of information, a distribution list was created in agreement with Prague, which Hirsch was to re-direct to Roland Jahn. People in Czechoslovakia would be included on the distribution list if they were interested in learning more about the samizdat periodical *Grenzfall*.[102] But *Grenzfall* did not come just by way of the Federal Republic to Prague (which protected the continuity), but rather was also (according to Petr Uhl and Anna Šabatová's recollection[103]) sent by regular post from the GDR to the address of Pavel Seifter in the ČSSR.[104]

One can assume that 'Information about Charter 77' was also sent in the same two-tracked way to the editors of *Grenzfall*, something which Peter

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[99] Timoty Garton Ash, *Ein Jahrhundert wird abgewählt: Aus den Zentren Mitteleuropas 1980-1990* (Munich: Dt. Taschenbuch-Verlag, 1990), 78.

[100] Anna Šabatová, interview with the author, Prague, 14 Oct. 2006.

[101] Petr Uhl, interview with the author, Prague, 5 Nov. 2006.

[102] Ralf Hirsch, interview with the author, Berlin, 24 Jan. 2006.

[103] Both remembered the poor quality of the East German envelopes in which *Grenzfall* was mailed. Petr Uhl and Anna Šabatová, interview with the author, Prague, 4 Jan. 2010.

[104] The MfS registered the contacts between Ralf Hirsch and Pavel Seifter. However, Seifter's name and address appeared, for example, totally wrong in a report about the contacts of oppositionists in the ČSSR and GDR: 'Pavel Seifter, Prag 7, Verakowa 9, 120 00'. Pavel Seifter lived on Veverkova Street with the postal code 170 000. See: Informace ze spolupráce s MStB NDR – opozice v NDR, 20.1.1988. Anlage 1, 'Verbindungen oppositioneller Kräfte der DDR in die ČSSR', No. 1080, fond X. správy SNB, ABS ČR.

Grimm confirmed.[105] 'The GDR, the opposition gave us a lot, we were a source of inspiration for one another, at various times in various ways,' recounted Uhl, who was one among few who had observed an important difference between the oppositions in both countries.[106] In his view, there was a greater variety of alternative groups in the GDR, who nevertheless each focused for the most part on just one main issue. As a result, there was the independent peace movement, whose development he followed with interest in the second half of the 1980s. Yet as well he was inspired by the ecological activists and not least of all the women's groups. Together with his wife he thought about the fact that the women's movement in the GDR distinguished itself in many respects from its West German equivalent. 'In the GDR, the struggle of women was not in the first instance against the dominance of the men, but rather against dominance as such, so it was against the prohibition on freedom of opinion, against bureaucratization and against militarization', was how an article in Charter 77's samizdat journal characterized the peace activities in the GDR.[107]

The Uhls followed the political developments in the GDR attentively, but in their estimation what was missing among the individual initiatives was an awareness of what was common among them. Anna Šabatová picked up through conversations with visitors from East Germany that 'our movement [Charter 77, T.V.] was more broadly rooted and more closely connected within itself'.[108] Moreover, almost all the generations were represented in Charter 77, which Šabatová, moreover, saw as being absent in the GDR. Ralf Hirsch, on the other hand, mentioned that the distinctiveness of the IFM lay in its representation of different generations that did not stand in competition with one another.[109] This aspect was in addition to its goal-oriented thematic focus on human rights, its constructive distance to the church, and not least its readiness to speak to the western media.

Among the east central European countries, it was the GDR that primarily interested Jaroslav Šabata. Nevertheless, he was convinced that Charter 77 by comparison had developed a structure that had a greater ability to develop. In this way, toward the end of the 1980s, new initiatives emerged in direct relationship to Charter 77: 'In the GDR, the opposition had more focal points, but none were in a position to take over the function

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[105] Peter Grimm, telephone interview with the author, Prague-Berlin, 15 Sep. 2010.

[106] Petr Uhl, interview with the author, Prague, 5 Nov. 2006.

[107] 'Mírové aktivity v NDR: Mírové hnutí v NDR', *Informace o Chartě 77* 8, 8 (1985), 12.

[108] Anna Šabatová, interview with the author, Prague, 10 Aug. 2007.

[109] Ralf Hirsch, interview with the author, Berlin, 24 Jan. 2006.

of an umbrella organisation.'[110] Basically, in the GDR 'another kind of dissidence was present, for which an internal development was lacking,' is how Šabata expressed it.[111]

In the ČSSR, two further specific characteristics of the East German development were perceived. This is how František Stárek recounted it: 'What bothered me especially about the East Germans was that they always flirted with communism, they simply said things which among us not even ex-communists would have said.'[112] Jaroslav Šabata noticed in a conversation with Bärbel Bohley in Petr Uhl's flat 'a specific leftist nuance in the GDR opposition'.[113] Miloš Rejchrt had information about the movement 'Swords into Ploughshares' and was surprised that certain critical attitudes were always still linked with a fundamental loyalty toward the regime. The uniqueness of the GDR existed as well in its critical attitude toward some aspects of western democracy:

> None of us believed that the egoism in the west was greater than the egoism which we were experiencing here. We were convinced that the elbow society, the desire for consumption was considerably more broadly present among us.[114]

The 'leftist leaning'[115] of the East German dissidence was, however, in essence more complex than many Czechoslovak oppositions thought. Gerd Poppe aptly pointed out that it was in fact the different experience of the defeat of the Prague Spring and the consequences of it in both societies that constituted the main reason for the diverse interpretations of the concept of socialism. At a roundtable discussion in April 2001, Poppe said that 'the doubts about the reformability of the system led there [in the ČSSR, T.V.] in the end to a strengthening of the opposition. We did not experience that until much later'.[116]

As Thomas Klein commented, in the ČSSR (as a result of the normalization policies of Gustáv Husák) there was less and less debate about socialist models. On account of the arrests and repression, it was the defence of civil and human rights that moved to the forefront. By contrast, in the GDR

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[110] Jaroslav Šabata, interview with the author, Brno, 30 Aug. 2007.

[111] Jaroslav Šabata, interview with the author, Prague, 15 May 2006.

[112] František Stárek, interview with the author, Prague, 21 Apr. 2008,.

[113] Jaroslav Šabata, interview with the author, Brno, 30 Aug. 2007.

[114] Miloš Rejchrt, interview with the author, Prague, 12 Feb. 2008.

[115] Kuhrt, *Am Ende*, 794.

[116] 'Das freie Wort', 109.

among the opposition minorities, deliberating about this 'socialist alternative' and its corresponding economic system continued on into the 1970s.[117]

In this respect, the Czechoslovak opposition was really totally different from the East German. Yet, in the GDR (beginning in the 1980s) a process took place that involved a gradual emancipation from the concept of socialism and it increased in intensity in the second half of the 1980s. From that point on, the ideal of democracy was one of the guiding ideas of the opposition groups in the GDR. Karsten Timmer called attention to the specifically 'direct democratic character' of the GDR groups for whom it was valid that: 'the less the state is present, the greater the possibilities which the citizens have and the more democratic the society.'[118] The critique of the western style of consumption, about which the East German oppositionists (in comparison with the other east bloc states) were best informed, was always linked with a criticism of the conditions in the GDR. A few western observers and also Czechoslovak dissidents were convinced (on account of certain anarchistic tendencies and a striving for an East German identity) that the East German basis groups were fundamentally leftist; but they were not recognizing that a socio-critical accent was present in it.

In a letter written in the summer of 1977, Ladislav Hejdánek came closer to the view of Edelbert Richter, according to whom the main problem lay in the fact that the west was not totally democratic and the east not totally socialist. 'Now it has to do with whether we will succeed in socializing western Europe or democratizing eastern Europe,' was what Hejdánek wrote.[119] However, in his criticism of the 'political and economic servitude' Richter went significantly further. In May 1985, he wrote:

> We have a choice just between these evils, because both (liberal or socialist) have long ago naively made the choice of a form of production which from the very start stood in contradiction to their principles. This naïveté has today become obvious: in a deep environmental and motivational crisis.[120]

It can hardly be a surprise that a certain aspect of the works of Václav Havel was thought about intensely in the GDR, namely, the determination

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[117] Thomas Klein, *'Frieden und Gerechtigkeit!' Die Politisierung der Unabhängigen Friedensbewegung in Ost-Berlin während der 80er Jahre* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2007), 298.

[118] Karsten Timmer, *Vom Aufbruch zum Umbruch: Die Bürgerbewegung in der DDR* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2000), 69.

[119] Ladislav Hejdánek, letter no. 17 (7 July 1977), in Ladislav Hejdánek, *Dopisy příteli I* (Prague: s.n., 1977), 161.

[120] Edelbert Richter, 'Zu den inneren Ursachen der Blockkonfrontation in Europa' [written in May 1985], *Spuren*: *Zur Geschichte der Friedensbewegung in der DDR* (= *radix-Blätter,* 6 Jan. 1988), 22.

that the democratic regimes had not fully grasped the actual essence of the totalitarian system. These regimes presented in reality a distorting mirror for all of modern civilization, according to Havel, 'a challenge for a general revision of the self-conception' of the western democracies.[121] The criticism of 'production fetish' was more marked in the GDR than in the ČSSR, but it was also perceptible there.

Attempts by a few East German basis groups to view the United States and the Soviet Union as equal to one another, evoked reactions from the dissidence in Czechoslovakia. Part of the Czechoslovak dissidence consequently refrained from collaboration with the peace movement. It was not until the cross-border debates in the middle of the 1980s that the prejudices against the independent peace movement were partially overcome. Many Czechoslovak oppositionists did not grasp until later that the East German peace movement first and foremost was a 'homemade event', a reaction to the pressure of militarization.

Some Czechoslovak authors insinuated that the opposition in the GDR was aimed primarily at improving socialism. With Gerd Poppe, one can assert to the contrary that it '[was] only a minority in the opposition who primarily had that goal, "improving socialism"'.[122] An element of the reticence in the East German dissidents to publically appear against the SED regime was probably more so a rather pragmatic reaction to the existing conditions, something strengthened by the existence of the second German state rather than a sign of a belief in socialism. Because whoever did not want to run the risk of being deported to the Federal Republic, had to engage in self-censorship. 'For tactical reasons, fixed boundaries are part of an opposition in a dictatorship. One could of course demonstratively say that we will act in such a way, as if we were living in a totally different system; however, one cannot actually do that in a dictatorship,' is how Poppe expressed it.[123] In the eyes of Czechoslovak oppositionists, the behaviour of the East German basis groups could appear as mildly conformist or reformist. Nevertheless, the images of reform did not diverge from one another all that much; they differed as to the extent of the reforms that were viewed as necessary and in the readiness to include the experiences of the democratic west in the considerations.

Above all in the perspective of the Czech Protestant church – and not just there – there was an awareness of the strongly divergent position of the Protestant church in the GDR. Protestant pastor and signer of Charter 77,

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[121] Václav Havel, 'Politika a svědomí' (Feb. 1984), in his *Do různých stran: Eseje a články z let 1983-1989* (Prague: Lidové noviny, 1990), 41-59, at 49.

[122] 'Das freie Wort', 133.

[123] Ibid., 135.

Jan Šimsa, admired the youth work that a few of the youth pastors in the GDR were doing. He learned about the church schools at which ex-matriculated students or young people could study who had been refused a regular education. And he heard about the conscripts doing construction work. Yet, in his opinion his son who was a conscientious objector for Christian reasons, was influenced more so from Poland. Anna Šabatová saw 'a latent oppositional function' for the Protestant church in the GDR, which in her opinion had contributed to that fact that the border between those who thought differently and the rest of the society in the GDR did not run with the same sharp edge as in Czechoslovakia.[124]

Conclusions

One can conclude that the East German side was overall substantially better informed about the ČSSR than conversely. The Czechoslovak expatriates fostered that. Many texts and declarations were very quickly translated into German, which facilitated that perception. In the ČSSR, it was primarily the *Information about Charter 77* which published things about the developments in the GDR. Although the cooperation of state security services of both countries made direct contacts more difficult, it was nevertheless possible in the second half of the 1980s to internationalise the dissidence. That then contributed importantly to the collapse of the communist regimes. For, the mutual solidarity and support put pressure on the rulers. The meaning of the joint actions was to be found, however, not mainly in the creation of political contacts. Much more so, as Ladislav Hejdánek expressed it, it was about 'bringing things into the light of day: we knew of each another and were ready to work with one another in the future'.[125]

[124] Anna Šabatová, interview with the author, Prague, 10 Aug. 2007.

[125] Ladislav Hejdánek, interview with the author, Písek, 4 Sep. 2007. This work came about in the context of the research project GAP 410/12/2287.

JULIA METGER

WRITING THE PAPERS

HOW WESTERN CORRESPONDENTS REPORTED THE FIRST DISSIDENT TRIALS IN MOSCOW, 1965-1972

Introduction

'Accused Soviet Writers Appeal at Trial for Artistic Freedom' (*NYT*)

'Russians Can Dissent, But' (*NYT*)

'Russian Writers Say They Had No Political Motives' (*Times*)

'Der Moskauer Literaturprozeß' (*FAZ*)[1]

In mid-February 1966, two Russian writers, Andrei Sinyavsky and Yuli Daniel, stood trial in Moscow. While the *New York Times* (*NYT*) correspondent Peter Grose focused on the writers' appeal for artistic freedom and their act of dissent, the unnamed journalist of the *Times* of London reported that the writers had no political motives, and the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (*FAZ*) merely reprinted a news agency report about the writers' trial. These captions and the ensuing articles in the three newspapers differed from each other in vocabulary and appreciation of the situation, as well as in how they related the accused's appeals and in the sources they were based on.

In these aspects they also differed from the reporting in the following few years and from today's analyses on dissent in the eastern bloc which highlight the emergence of Soviet dissent and civil rights activism. In hindsight, the trial of 1966 appears to have been a watershed moment in the

[1] Peter Grose, 'Accused Soviet Writers Appeal at Trial for Artistic Freedom', *NYT*, 12 Feb. 1966; Peter Grose, 'Russians Can Dissent, But', *NYT*, 13 Feb. 1966; Monitor, 'Russian Writers Say They Had No Political Motives', *Times*, 12 Feb. 1966, 7; dpa/AP, 'Der Moskauer Literaturprozeß', *FAZ*, 11 Feb. 1966, 28.

emergence of the Soviet dissident movement[2] – but in 1965/66, none of this was foreseeable.

Picking up on these differences, this paper argues that not only the intellectual dissent within Soviet society developed in the years following the trial of 1966, but that the transfer of information to the west and the circumstances under which it occurred evolved as well. One group of people that greatly contributed to this transfer of information were the western foreign correspondents who worked in Moscow in those years. Their reports about the Soviet dissidents appeared with increasing prominence in major western newspapers and can thus be assumed to have been widely read. However, the articles only hint at the process of how the journalists gained and transferred their knowledge: How did they obtain their information? From whom did they get it? How did their Moscow-based experiences reflect in their appreciation of the situation? These questions call for a precise inquiry into the working and living conditions in Moscow at that time. More abstractly, they call for an inquiry that highlights the interactions at a specific geographical location in the eastern centre of the cold war world, where the Moscow-based journalists made and processed their observations and related them to their western audiences, i.e., an inquiry that takes the spatial context into account.

A perspective that pays attention to these entanglements is one that is currently provided by the concept of 'transnationality'. Merging the different approaches that have been put forward in the debate around the transnational, the editors of the Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History, Akira Iriye and Pierre-Yves Saunier, describe it as 'an angle, a perspective that can be adopted by everyone who wants to address the entangled condition of the modern world' when they are interested in questions of 'links and flows, and want to track people, ideas, products, processes and patterns that operate over, across, through, beyond, above, under, or in-between polities and societies'.[3] A classical analysis of reception in the west or a classical comparison of these receptions would not explain the process of gaining, interpreting and transferring information. By taking a transnational perspective, however, and by focusing on a specific place and time (namely, Moscow 1965–72), the correspondents, their actions and

[2] See e.g. Wolfgang Eichwede, 'Archipel Gulag', in Wolfgang Eichwede, ed., *Samizdat: Alternative Kultur in Zentral- und Osteuropa: Die 60er bis 80er Jahre* (Bremen: Ed. Temmen, 2000), 8-19; Dietrich Beyrau, 'Die befreiende Tat des Wortes', in *ibid.*, 26-37.

[3] Akira Iriye and Pierre-Yves Saunier, 'The Professor and the Madman', in Akira Iriye and Pierre-Yves Saunier, eds., *The Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History* (Basingstoke et al.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), xvii-xx; Agnes Arndt, Joachim Häberlein and Christiane Reinecke, eds., *Vergleichen, Verflechten, Verwirren? Europäische Geschichtsschreibung zwischen Theorie und Praxis* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Rupprecht 2011).

their vocabulary can be analysed within the context of the time and space in which they were situated. This enables us to grasp their interpretive accomplishments in translating for their readerships in the west the dissident developments under way in the east. More abstractly, this perspective highlights the contingency of the knowledge about Soviet dissent.

This paper will show that the close reporting on the dissident trials became possible, firstly, because of the correspondents' establishing contact and trust with members of the liberal intelligentsia. This possibility was due to a general shift toward investigative journalism in the west, the cuing by ambitious and well-informed editors in the newspapers' home offices, and the open-mindedness and interests of the correspondents and their wives who were posted to Moscow and came into contact with the Muscovite intelligentsia. Secondly, it was advanced by the correspondents' personal astonishment when witnessing the developments, using highly impressionistic language to convey their feelings of amazement and support to the reader. They also hinted at increasingly reliable sources, with this secretive vagueness intensifying the sense of bravery and personal proximity, all within a general atmosphere of détente and intensifying mutual interest between people in the west and east. Thirdly, with increasing proximity between correspondents and dissidents, the newsmen transmitted the dissidents' claims with more precision, shifting from the outsiders' first interpretation of a matter of possible re-Stalinization to an almost-insiders' recapitulation of the vocabulary of legality and civil rights. Finally, a brief contrasting of the three newspapers' articles indicates the entanglement of the western newspapers, which reprinted agency reports and each other's comments, and thereby steadily began to use similar vocabulary to describe the phenomenon they were witnessing.

This paper will provide an empirical basis for these hypotheses by means of a brief case study focusing on the reporting about three major trials against Soviet dissidents in the years from 1965 to 1972.

Briefly: The Cold War, Soviet Dissent and the Media

Internationally, these were years of ambiguous change. They encompassed superpower détente and West German *Neue Ostpolitik*, leading up to the negotiations at the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). Armed conflicts under the auspices of the superpowers in various parts of the world eased while the quagmire of the Vietnam War left its imprint in polarizing standpoints among the political elites and broader parts of the societies on both sides of the east-west divide. Both in the east and west, students and intellectuals voiced their calls for more open and

civil societies, which culminated in 1968 and challenged (although in completely different ways) the conservative parts of their respective societies. Within the Soviet sphere of influence, the Prague Spring and the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 and the violent ending of the wave of protests in Poland in 1968 and 1970 cemented the Kremlin's claim to power while at the same time shocking parts of the societies. In the Soviet Union, Brezhnev emerged as the leading political figure from the collective leadership at the head of the state after Khrushchev was ousted. The 'thaw' that had begun under Khrushchev ended, and the Soviet intelligentsia apprehensively watched the struggle within the political realm between conservatives and reformers over the future course. The liberal wing of the intelligentsia feared re-Stalinization and a few of them spoke out openly for freedom of artistic expression. Within these ambiguous international, western, eastern and Soviet developments, public discourses were split between a longing for change, for a stabilization of the status quo and for a return to a status quo ante.[4]

Within this constellation, a wave of trials against some of the outspoken members of the liberal wing of the Soviet intelligentsia took place in Moscow. It began with the trial against Andrei Sinyavsky and Yuli Daniel in February 1966 and found its preliminary culmination with the one against Vladimir Bukovsky in January 1972. These two cases will feature prominently in this paper, along with another trial that took place in-between, shortly after international attention focused on the Warsaw Pact invasion to end the Prague Spring in August 1968. All three trials received much attention in the west and incited international protest against the Soviet Union.

Western media are generally assumed to have been an important voice broadcasting the agenda of the emerging dissident movement in the east, providing them with a certain insurance against persecution by focussing western public and political attention on those dissidents who stepped from anonymity into the limelight. The dissent in the Soviet Union has been widely documented and studied, fascinating observers and historians with the inner drive and audacity of the protagonists who voiced their opinions in a hostile political environment.[5] Various studies have focused on several

[4] See for a multi-perspective compilation Melvin Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War,* 3 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

[5] See the rich literature on dissent in the Soviet Union and eastern Europe, e.g. Anke Stephan, *Von der Küche auf den Roten Platz: Lebenswege sowjetischer Dissidentinnen* (Zürich: Pano, 2005); Dietrich Beyrau, *Intelligenz und Dissens: Die russischen Bildungsschichten in der Sowjetunion 1917-1985* (Göttingen: Vandenhoek & Ruprecht, 1993); Man-

different points: inter-bloc exchange and interconnection via samizdat and tamizdat[6], the western reception of developments within the Soviet Union as perceived via information transferred by the media ('Gulag-shock')[7], the instrumentalization of the media for propaganda purposes[8], and, recently, both the role of western radio transmissions in providing information to the societies on the eastern side of the 'iron curtain'[9] as well as the journalists' involvement as political avant-garde thinkers[10]. However, the journalists as *acteurs* and the process of gathering, interpreting and transferring information have so far received little attention in studies on the cold war.[11] In contrast, studies on correspondents as actors in west European and transatlantic relations in the late 19th and the mid-20th centuries have highlighted journalists as autonomous and politically involved actors within a specific political, social and cultural setting.[12] These studies provide the impulse to

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fred Sapper, Volker Weichsel, Wolfgang Eichwede, eds., *Blick zurück nach vorne: Samizdat, Internet und die Freiheit des Wortes*, thematic issue of *Osteuropa* 60 (2010).

[6] Wolfgang Eichwede, ed., *Samizdat: Alternative Kultur in Zentral- und Osteuropa: Die 60er bis 80er Jahre* (Bremen: Ed. Temmen, 2000); Christian Domnitz, José Faraldo and Paulina Gulińska-Jurgiel, eds., *Europa im Ostblock: Vorstellungen und Diskurse*, 1945–1991 (Köln et al.: Böhlau, 2008).

[7] See e.g. Ulrike Ackermann, *Sündenfall der Intellektuellen: Ein deutsch-französischer Streit von 1945 bis heute* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 2000); Sonja Hauschild, 'Propheten oder Störenfriede? Sowjetische Dissidenten in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und Frankreich und ihre Rezeption bei den Intellektuellen 1974–1977', available at www.epub.ub.uni-muenchen.de/1359/ Virtuelle Fachbibliothek Osteuropa (last visited 31 October 2011); Robert Horvath, '"The Solzhenitsyn Effect": East European Dissidents and the Demise of the Revolutionary Privilege', *Human Rights Quarterly* 4 (2007), 879-907.

[8] For an introduction see Nicholas J. Cull, 'Reading, viewing, and tuning in to the Cold War', in *Cambridge History of the Cold War*, vol. 2, 438-459; Jessica C.E. Gienow-Hecht, 'Culture and the Cold War in Europe', in *ibid.*, vol. 1, 398-419.

[9] Conference report, Voices of Freedom – Western Interference? 60 Years of Radio Free Europe in Munich and Prague, 28.-30. April 2011 in München, available at www.hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/tagungsberichte/id=3750, H-Soz-u-Kult, 30. July 2011 (last visited 30 October 2011).

[10] Guido Thiemeyer, '"Wandel durch Annäherung" Westdeutsche Journalisten in Osteuropa 1956–1978', *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 45 (2005), 101-116.

[11] Whitman Bassow provides a journalistic overview of American correspondents' experiences in Moscow during the Soviet era. Whitman Bassow, *The Moscow Correspondents: Reporting on Russia from the Revolution to Glasnost* (New York: Paragon House, 1988). Barbara Walker is currently analysing how the dissidents received the correspondents: Barbara Walker, 'Moscow Human Rights Defenders Look West: Attitudes toward U.S. Journalists in the 1960s and 1970s', *Kritika* 4 (2008), 905-927.

[12] Jessica Gienow-Hecht, *Transmission Impossible: American Journalism As Cultural Diplomacy in Postwar Germany, 1945–1955* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1999); Frank Bösch and Dominik Geppert, eds., *Journalists as Political Actors: Transfers and Interactions between Britain and Germany since the late 19th Century*

take a new look into the role and involvement of the western foreign correspondents who were working during the cold war and reporting from one of its centres.

By combining research on dissent and on press actors in a transnational perspective, our knowledge about dissent appears less as a given, less clear-cut and automatic, and more dependent on the agency of the transmitters. This approach will reroute our attention to the Moscow-based correspondents as *acteurs* and to the process of how they gathered, interpreted and transferred their knowledge on the trials mentioned above.

This sketch is based on a close reading of the articles featured by the *New York Times* and will briefly refer to the *Times* of London and the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* for support or contrast. All three were newspapers with an international reputation for being reliable, well-informed and widely read. Choosing these newspapers provides the opportunity to contrast different approaches to reporting the trials while extracting it from the individual paper's national contexts. The newspapers are not considered to be representing 'their' countries.

Assuming the perspective of an avid western newspaper reader, this paper will highlight what he or she would have read and perceived 'between the lines' about the reports on the three trials. While the choice of sources as well as of the perspective of the contemporary reader provide the advantage of tracing the developments step-by-step without focusing on the outcome, this approach, of course, imposes limits on the analysis by providing impressions and perceptions from the side of the readers. In this article, I will transcend these limits to some extent by an analysis of *NYT*-related archival documentation (and I will do so more thoroughly in the Ph.D. project to which this paper is leading).

Moscow, February 1966

The first news about the arrest of the two writers Andrei Sinyavsky and Yuli Daniel and the first western protests blindsided the Moscow-based western press.[13] When Soviet authorities arrested them in September 1965,

(Augsburg: Wißner, 2008); Antje Robrecht, *Diplomaten in Hemdsärmeln? Auslandskorrespondenten als Akteure in den deutsch-britischen Beziehungen 1945-1962* (Augsburg: Wißner, 2010).

[13] [N.N.], 'Crackdown is Feared', *NYT*, 19 Oct. 1965; Hermann Pörzgen, 'Die unbequemen Autoren', *FAZ*, 10 Nov. 1965, 24; Reuters, 'Investigation of 2 Writers Goes on, Soviet Aide Says', *NYT*, 9 Dec. 1965; Reuters, 'Soviet Writers 3 Months in Detention', *Times*, 9 Dec. 1965, 10; Peter Grose, 'Noted Poet Detained in Moscow Protest', *NYT*, 18 Dec. 1965.

the correspondents heard about it through rumours spreading back from the west. In the following months, attentive readers who perhaps were devouring a few of the main international western newspapers for breakfast could only wonder what was happening in Moscow. They learnt about rumours and unverified information spread by word of mouth among the Moscow intelligentsia. It was impossible to know from whom the newsmen were gaining their information since they seemed to rely on 'some observers here' and 'authoritative sources'. In fact, the Moscow correspondents seemed to be more or less simply contextualizing the news that had already spread in the west with a time-lag and with barely any further or in-depth information. It was only several weeks after the arrests that they could finally report an official comment from Soviet authorities about the arrests and the upcoming trials. Interpreting the Moscow events, the correspondents suggested the arrests presaged the beginning of a new political drive against the liberal wing of the Soviet intelligentsia, which they contextualized in the overarching concern present in the west as to whether or not the Soviet Union under Brezhnev was re-Stalinizing.

In mid-December, however, an article by an American correspondent forecast the relationship between western correspondents and the independent thinkers of the Moscow intelligentsia: a demonstration on Pushkin Square by students and university teachers against the arrests took place on December 5, the anniversary of the Soviet constitution. This was reported two weeks later with an air of perplexity by *NYT*-correspondent Peter Grose, who related the protesters' demands word-for-word, namely, to hold a public trial in accordance with the provisions of Soviet law and the Soviet constitution (18 Dec. 1965). Grose reported about it without naming his sources, indicating only 'an authoritative source'. Nevertheless, this was a rare in-depth background article – which a cursory reader might easily have overlooked.

But then, when the trial finally took place in February 1966, even the less attentive newspaper reader could not have helped but perceive the following picture:[14]

[14] Peter Grose, 'Kremlin Cracks down on Smuggling Authors', *NYT*, 23 Jan. 1966; Peter Grose, '2 Soviet Writers Plead Not Guilty', *NYT*, 11 Feb. 1966; Peter Grose, 'Accused Soviet Writers Appeal at Trial for Artistic Freedom', *NYT*, 12 Feb. 1966; Peter Grose, 'Russians Can Dissent, But', *NYT*, 13 Feb. 1966; Peter Grose, 'Hard Labor Asked for Two Russians', *NYT*, 13 Feb. 1966; Peter Grose, 'Soviet Sentences 2 Writers Today', *NYT*, 14 Feb. 1966; Peter Grose, '2 Soviet Authors are Convicted', *NYT*, 15 Feb. 1966; [N.N.] 'Excerpts from Soviet Reports on Trial of Writers', *NYT*, 15 Feb. 1966; Peter Grose, 'Soviet Reported Tightening Surveillance over Nonconformist Intellectuals', *NYT*, 17 Feb. 1966; Peter Grose, 'Two Score Writers' Trial', *NYT*, 21 Feb. 1966.

It was a very cold week in mid-February. A few western journalists showed up at the site of the trial, although they did not reveal how they had learnt when and where it would take place. Surely, it had not been the Soviet authorities who had informed them. They arrived vaguely expecting to be allowed to attend the hearings, but instead found themselves blocked from entering the building. Officially, the trial was declared to be an open public trial in accordance with Soviet procedural law, but the correspondents were sent away with the explanation that the courtroom was already overfilled with spectators. So they turned away – and then they witnessed something utterly unexpected: there, in the freezing cold, in the side street where the five-story yellow courthouse was located, they caught sight of a shivering band of young people, pacing up and down the street and openly expressing their sympathy and concern for one of the accused, their teacher Andrei Sinyavsky. The same thing happened on the following days of the hearings. Now, the *NYT*-reporters overheard students and older people debating in the street, mainly about the question of varying opinions and artistic freedom within the communist system. They watched Mrs Daniel, the wife of the arrested Yuli Daniel, leave the courthouse in tears. Amazed, the western journalists reported that the two writers pleaded not guilty to the charge of anti-Soviet propaganda, learning about it by relying on a mix of official Soviet newspaper accounts for information about the proceedings within the building and on eyewitness observations and grapevine-rumours in front of it.

On the fourth day of the trial, the two writers were convicted and sentenced to several years of labour camp. The newsmen continued to gather their information in front of the court building, still relying on a mix of official press and unofficial rumours. But now, apparently, they were slowly making connections with the other shivering persons in front of the building, watching attentively and trying to establish personal contacts: 'The wives of the two writers were in tears as they walked from the courtroom into a driving snow. They kissed each other and walked off in opposite directions with friends. The Komsomol youth prevented newsmen from talking with them' (15 Feb. 1966). Immediately after the trial, the *NYT*-newsmen could provide background information they could not have received in any other way than through personal acquaintances with members of the liberal literary intelligentsia, for instance, about the repressive treatment of the defendants' supporters on the site. They quoted their sources vaguely as 'reliable sources', 'reliable informants', and as 'friends of the two writers', guarding their anonymity.

Then, within a week, Peter Grose met with Aleksandr Yesenin-Volpin, 'a prominent member of Moscow's literary "underground"', for an interview in his three-room Moscow apartment, which he quoted word-for-

word, providing Yesenin-Volpin's full identity, background and political standpoint – something Grose must have, under Moscow circumstances, had Yesenin-Volpin's explicit permission to do. Why his Soviet acquaintance was still free despite his open criticism of the regime, Grose could not explain.

This is, in a brief sketch, the picture as a *New York Times* reader would have envisioned it. And it was, in fact, backed by a number of intertwined developments that took place behind the scenes. By the mid-1960s, the *NYT* was shifting from a newspaper-of-reference to a more vivid style in research and writing. The newly appointed managing editor of the *NYT* and his assistant, Clifton Daniel and Harrison Salisbury, had both spent several years in Moscow a decade earlier.[15] They had enjoyed the sense of novelty and adventure that a posting to Moscow provided, and they had endured the hardship of that posting which left the correspondents rather isolated within a Soviet society that was still upset by the terrors of war and Stalinism. Both had learned Russian and had tried to get to know local people, and both had tried to provide their readers with a full picture of life in the Soviet Union. A little after their Moscow postings, during Khrushchev's 'thaw', it became easier for western correspondents to come into contact with the cultural elite of Moscow, and the NYC-based managing editors urged their successors to find and intensify contacts.[16]

So when Peter Grose was transferred to Moscow in 1965, the *NYT*-editors prompted him to bring a new depth and liveliness into his articles, to inform the western readers how Soviet society thought and lived, and to go beyond traditional fact-and-politics-based journalism. They also encouraged Peter Grose and his wife Claudia to learn Russian and to delve into Moscow cultural life. The Groses apparently gladly complied, as did similarly Theodore Shabad (also *NYT*-correspondent) and his wife.[17] From their acquaintances with the Moscow intelligentsia, each received a tip about the trial. And they went to watch and listen. Within weeks after the trial, Grose and Shabad informed their editors that they were 'getting deeper and deeper into the so-called clandestine writers' circle'.[18] As early as March 1966, the

[15] Interview with Clifton Daniel, folder 13, box 1, and interview with Harrison E. Salisbury, folder 17, box 3, Papers of Whitman Bassow (henceforth: Bassow Papers), Library of Congress, Manuscript Division.

[16] Folder Moscow Bureau 1965, box 595, Papers of Harrison Salisbury (henceforth: Salisbury Papers), Rare Books and Manuscripts Library, Columbia University.

[17] Interview with Theodore Shabad, folder 21, box 3, Bassow Papers; interview with Peter Grose, folder 5, box 2, Bassow Papers; Papers of Peter Grose, box 1, Manuscript Division, Princeton University.

[18] Letter, Grose to Salisbury, 28 Jan. 1966, folder Moscow 1966, box 595, Salisbury Papers.

NYT sent a third journalist to Moscow, Raymond Anderson, to support Grose and Shabad in the coverage of the events around those whom they called the young people and the writers.

Similarly, the London *Times* reader saw in detail the 'small, bearded Sinyavsky and the tall, thin Yuli Daniel' not pleading guilty at their trial. It was held 'on the second floor of a mustard-coloured building belonging to the Moscow regional court in a quiet courtyard in the western part of the city' and at the conclusion of it, the forty young people who had gathered in front of the building presented the wives of the two defendants 'with bunches of flowers' when they emerged from the building in the evening (11 Feb. 1966). Verbatim, the *Times* printed parts of the debate between the prosecution and defendants, as provided by the Soviet news agency Tass. But it also reported on the discussion between journalists and students in the street, namely, on the question of whether or not the western press should be allowed into the courtroom. The news coverage, however, seems vaguely impersonal in comparison to the *NYT*-coverage. While critically relating Tass and *Izvestia* information and adding personal impressions from the site, no correspondent was identified. Instead, *Monitor* was the vague source of the articles. Oxford-based scholar Max Hayward contributed commentaries, describing the events as 'coercion [by Soviet authorities] to silence awkward voices' (1 Feb. 1966). In the days leading up to the trial, Hayward had already pointed out that 'for all the known cases there are others which we [the collective West] may never hear about' (1 Feb. 1966).

An *FAZ*-reader would have learnt much less about the events, the protests and the atmosphere.[19] The *FAZ*'s Moscow correspondent, Hermann Pörzgen, who had in November reported 'rumours in Moscow literary circles' about the arrests of 'Alexej [sic!] Sinjawski' and 'Jury [sic!] Daniel' in the Feuilleton part of the paper, was out of town during the first weeks of 1966. He only returned to Moscow in mid-February, when Soviet authorities finally issued a visa readmitting him to the country. In the meanwhile, the paper had featured dispatches by various western news agencies, mostly the West German Deutsche Presseagentur (dpa) as well as the American Associated Press (AP) and United Press International (UPI), to provide the basic facts of the case – featured, up until the date of the trial, in the Feuilleton and only afterwards in the political pages of the paper. Editor Karl Korn – again in the Feuilleton – contributed from

[19] dpa/AP, 'Der Moskauer Literaturprozeß', *FAZ*, 11 Feb. 1966, 28; UPI, 'Arbeitslager für Schriftsteller' *FAZ*, 15 Feb. 1966, 5; AP, 'Kein Problem gelöst', *FAZ*, 16 Feb. 1966, 2; Karl Korn, 'Der Prozeß beginnt', *FAZ*, 21 Feb. 1966, 24; dpa/AP, 'Moskau zur Rechtfertigung genötigt', *FAZ*, 22 Feb. 1966, 2.

Frankfurt, not only commenting but also adding the vivid imagery which the other newspapers had already provided their audiences a week earlier. Pörzgen and Korn both considered the trial to be a continuation of the long line of political trials against liberal writers that had previously taken place back in tsarist times.

The newspapers revealed further information on the proceedings within the fortnight of the verdict,[20] with the *NYT* reprinting an article the London *Times* had published based in turn on an article by the Italian *Il Giorno* (25 Feb. 1966) that had included excerpts from what was considered to be a transcript of the writers' statements. The *NYT* commented: 'The paper did not disclose how the transcript had been obtained, but it indicated that it had come from Moscow by way of an East European capital and Vienna.' (25 Feb. 1966) A few weeks later, the Moscow newsmen mentioned a petition by forty prominent liberal intellectuals to the Soviet government, having been informed by 'reliable sources'. And in mid-April, the *NYT* printed at length a description of the trial and a transcript of the proceedings that had reached New York from the Paris-based Polish magazine *Kultura*. It was *Kultura* that also published ten letters of protest signed by more than ninety Soviet intellectuals in November 1966, having received them in early autumn and believing them to have been passed 'from hand to hand in several major Russian cities'. Shortly afterwards, *NYT*-correspondent Theodore Shabad informed his readers about one of these letters of protest which the American publishers had received via 'undisclosed channels'. They considered it authentic and provided it to the Moscow correspondent before publication and it was also reprinted by the *NYT*.

In hindsight, the trial is generally considered the watershed moment in the emergence of the dissident movement. But even though it attracted much western attention and unleashed strong protests mainly by western writers, the implications were unclear at that time. The journalists concluded they had witnessed two novelties, firstly, the defendants' pleading not guilty, and secondly, the 'dissent from the party line' by prominent members of the literary establishment refusing to turn against the two accused writers, with the students milling in front of the courthouse giving evidence of the tug-of-war between liberal and conservative strata of the

[20] Rome-correspondent of the Times, 'Sinyavsky's Defence Speech Quoted by Newspaper', *Times*, 25 Feb. 1966, 10; [N.N.] '"My works are not hostile", Milan Paper Quotes Sinyavsky', *NYT*, 25 Feb. 1966; Special to the New York Times in Paris, '95 in Soviet Union Protest Sentencing of 2 Fellow Writers', *NYT*, 14 Nov. 1966; Special to The New York Times in Moscow, 'Russians Protest Writers' Jailings', *NYT*, 16 March 1966; Max Hayward, 'The Trial of Sinyavsky and Daniel', *NYT*, 17 April 1966; Theodore Shabad, '63 Writers' Plea to Kremlin Bared', *NYT*, 19 Nov. 1966; [N.N.] 'Texts of Soviet Writers' Petition to Kremlin and of Letter of Protest', *NYT*, 19 Nov. 1966.

communist elite. The reader of any of the three newspapers would have received the main information and evaluation of the case. Moreover, the reader of the Anglo-American papers could also sense a high level of novelty and uncertainty from the side of the reporting journalists who were on site as ear- and eye-witnesses and who – as they hinted at in their reporting – entered into contact with the liberal intelligentsia and the protestors in front of the court house.

Moscow, October 1968

Early in 1968, *NYT*-readers found themselves informed by the journalist Raymond Anderson about a trial against four young *literati* to take place shortly after the Soviet New Year and the traditional Russian festivities of early to mid-January.[21] Again it was freezing cold. Again the newsmen were blocked from attending the trial. Again they resorted to reporting the events they witnessed in front of a dingy three-story brick courthouse. More than before, the protests by friends and relatives seemed noteworthy. Anderson described them vividly, along with direct quotations from the debates he overheard and vivid descriptions of the rough scenes he witnessed when relatives of the accused argued and pushed their way into the building and when the supporters protested in front of the courthouse. Especially former major general Pyotr Grigorenko, with his open refusal to be intimidated, featured prominently in the articles, as well as Pavel Litvinov, grandson of former Soviet Foreign Minister Maxim Litvinov. Up to that point, the *NYT*-newsmen had been discussing letters of appeal circulated by Soviet intellectuals, but rather than receiving the letters directly, they had gained access to them via publishing houses in the west. On the second day of the trial, however, Grigorenko distributed copies of a peti-

[21] Raymond H. Anderson, 'Trial of Dissidents, Held a Year, Opens in Moscow', *NYT*, 9 Jan. 1968; Raymond H. Anderson, 'Access Is Asked in Moscow Trial', *NYT*, 10 Jan. 1968; Raymond H. Anderson, '2 Russians Term Trial a "Mockery"', *NYT*, 13 Jan. 1968; Reuters, 'Text of Appeal Denouncing Trial of Four Russians', *NYT*, 13 Jan. 1968. See also Kyril Tidmarsh, 'Russians to Be Tried on Monday', *Times*, 7 Jan. 1968, 4; Kyril Tidmarsh, 'Moscow Trial Closed to West', *Times*, 9 Jan. 1968, 1; Kyril Tidmarsh, 'Ex-General in Moscow Trial Protest', *Times*, 10 Jan. 1968, 1; Kyril Tidmarsh, 'Heavy Sentences on Writers Sought', *Times*, 12 Jan. 1968, 5; Kyril Tidmarsh, 'Red Carnations for Defence Lawyers', *Times*, 13 Jan. 1968, 1; [N.N.], 'Appeal to World Opinion over Russian Writers', *Times*, 13 Jan. 1968, 8. For the *FAZ* e.g.: Claus Gennrich, 'Vier Schriftsteller in Moskau auf der Anklagebank', *FAZ*, 8. Jan. 1968, 3; *FAZ* Moskau, 'Moskauer Schriftsteller-Prozeß eröffnet', *FAZ*, 9 Jan. 1968, 3; *FAZ* Moskau, 'Harte Strafen für Moskauer Schriftsteller', *FAZ*, 13 Jan. 1968, 3; Claus Gennrich, 'Um die Freiheit des Wortes in der Sowjetunion', *FAZ*, 13 Jan. 1968, 2.

tion he was about to hand to the Moscow City Court, calling for a fair and open trial of the four defendants – whom Anderson, by the way, now termed 'dissidents'. Grigorenko, Litvinov, Yesenin-Volpin and Yakir attended the protests and were obviously willing to be named personally by the *NYT*-correspondent in his dispatch about the events. On 13 January 1968, the *NYT* published the translation of an open letter by Litvinov and Mrs Daniel to 'World Public Opinion' which they had signed with full names and addresses and handed to some of the foreign correspondents a few hours before the court adjourned for deliberation and which the Reuters-news agency correspondent transmitted immediately via the wire service. Obviously, the fact that they had received the letter directly by hand was newsworthy.

The trials of January and the accompanying protests featured prominently in the western press, in the news sections as well as the editorials and features sections. 'Litvinov and Mrs Daniel', as the press tended to call them, were therefore well-known figures when they were arrested in the summer of that year. On 27 August 1968, the *NYT*-readers saw it black on white beside their cup of coffee at breakfast: Mrs Daniel and Pavel Litvinov 'were reliably reported tonight [that is on 26 August, the day the dispatch was sent] to have been arrested in Red Square' where they were staging a demonstration against the invasion of Czechoslovakia.[22] Their names and pictures must by then have seemed at least vaguely familiar to the reader, having scanned them over and over again since the beginning of the year. Explaining the events, the *NYT*-correspondent referred to the two as 'active in a dissident movement of Soviet intellectuals', which indicated that background explanations were still necessary as well as introducing the term 'dissident movement' as a legitimate description.

The trial took place on another cold day, in October, in the same dingy three-story court building in a downtown Moscow side-street that was blocked off by the police while sympathizers gathered in front of the building as before. Henry Kamm covered the trial for the *NYT*.[23] Now, the

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[22] Special to The New York Times, 'Russians said to seize Mrs. Daniel and a Litvinov', *NYT*, 27 Aug. 1968.

[23] Henry Kamm, 'Five Who Staged a Pro-Czech Protest in Red Square Go on Trial in Moscow', *NYT*, 10 Oct. 1968; Henry Kamm, 'Prosecutor Asks Exile for Three on Trial of Pro-Czechs in Moscow', *NYT*, 11 Oct. 1968; Henry Kamm, '3 Soviet Dissidents Exiled and 2 Jailed', *NYT*, 12 Oct. 1968; Henry Kamm, '"For Three Minutes I Felt Free"', *NYT*, 13 Oct. 1968; Henry Kamm, '6 Reported Held in Soviet Dissent', *NYT*, 14 Oct. 1968; Henry Kamm, 'Soviet Trial of 5 pro-Czechs Is Termed the Most "Political" Case', *NYT*, 15 Oct. 1968; [N.N.] 'Excerpts from Proceedings of the Trial in Moscow', *NYT*, 15 Oct. 1968; Kyril Tidmarsh, 'Moscow Officials Set Up an Iron Curtain round Foreign Press', *Times*, 1 May 1968, 10.

journalist apparently received his information from relatives of the defendants who had been admitted to the hearings. He added vivid descriptions of the events in front of the building, where protesters set up to gather signatures for their petition, where former major general Grigorenko advocated civil liberties, and where a heated discussion blazed between sympathizers and communist youth, which Kamm related verbatim. He commented (10 Oct. 1968):

> Observers could not recall a previous occasion when radical opposition views had been so loudly pronounced. The friends of the regime did little to discourage Russians from speaking freely with foreigners. For the first time, also, a member of the Press Department of the Foreign Ministry was present to provide information to correspondents.

The trial lasted for several days and the readers received vivid daily reports.

Although five persons were on trial, Litvinov and Daniel featured most prominently among the five 'dissidents', as they were now termed. Relatives of the defendants who attended the trial let the correspondents know in detail about what happened and quoted one of the dissidents, Vadim Delone, as saying 'For three minutes on Red Square I felt free. [...] I am glad to take your three years for that.' Kamm highlighted: 'The final statements of the defendants were expositions of their dissident political faith, according to the relatives' (12 Oct. 1968). Again, snow was falling when the relatives of the defendants filed out of the building along a path lined by sympathizers. 'All of them – including Mrs Daniel's 17-year-old son, Aleksandr; her lame brother leaning heavily on his cane, and Mr Litvinov's aunt, Tatyana M. Litvinov – had been crying. They made a noticeable effort not to let it show as they stepped into the street, where a light snow mingled with falling leaves' (12 Oct. 1968). Looking back on the three days of the trial, Kamm commented that the 'Prague spring' had apparently come 'to one dingy street in Moscow' where (13 Oct. 1968)

> from morning into evening dissidents from the Soviet way of life openly put their radical views to milling, informal groups. [...] The small band is becoming increasingly outspoken not because Soviet society has become more tolerant of dissent. What one senses in talking with them is an increasing sense of anguish that the small measure of liberty that appeared [...] earlier in the decade, is being snuffed out. Their courage is born of despair.

On 14 October, the first weekday after the trial, the *NYT*-correspondent had already talked to his Moscow acquaintances, citing 'informed quarters'. He already possessed the transcripts of the defendants' statements, from which he extensively related their political standpoints, namely, calling for the government to respect the right of free speech and assembly as provided for

by the Soviet constitution and describing their plight as political dissidents leaving it unclear in the article, though, whether it was Kamm or they themselves calling them dissidents. The *NYT* published the transcripts of the proceedings, including the final pleas by Litvinov and Mrs Daniel, on 15 October, apparently receiving it cabled directly from the *NYT*-Moscow bureau.

And in fact, in 1968 the *NYT*-editors encouraged their Moscow-based journalists, Raymond Anderson and Henry Kamm, to watch the developments in the dissident scene very closely.[24] At the same time, relations between Soviet authorities and those western correspondents who had close contacts with the dissidents became increasingly strained. The Soviet officials attempted to pressure the correspondents into conformity by providing them with information themselves, by indicating that they could make their working conditions in Moscow so much more difficult, and by alluding to the possible expulsion of the correspondents from the country and the closure of the *NYT*-office. In certain cases, the correspondents took this risk. After the trial in January 1968, the Soviet Foreign Ministry had warned the correspondents not to attend a press conference convened by Ginzburg's mother. Anderson remembers:

> So I sent a message to New York saying, 'Should I go? If I go, it probably means the *New York Times* bureau will be shut down.' So I asked for guidance. They came back – 'You cover the news; we'll take the consequences.' It means that I could go. So I went. But the Soviet authorities protected us from ourselves because they had KGB men lined up outside the apartment; we couldn't get in.[25]

A few months later, in October 1968, Anderson nevertheless became the first correspondent to be expelled from the country in the context of the coverage of the dissident phenomenon.

The London *Times* readers were presented with a similarly vivid description, although through a mix of Moscow-based sources.[26] The *Times*' own correspondent, Kyril Tidmarsh, provided some of the information, usually referring to the individuals on trial by giving their names or referring to them as 'the defendants', 'the accused' or 'dissident liberals'.

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[24] Folder Moscow 1968, box 595, Salisbury Papers.

[25] Interview with Raymond Anderson, folder 1, box 1, Bassow Papers.

[26] Via NYT News Service Raymond H. Anderson, 'Arrests at Soviet Protest Rallies', *Times*, 27 Aug. 1968, 1; Kyril Tidmarsh, 'Crowd Argues the Case as Litvinov Stands Trial', *Times*, 10 Oct. 1968, 6; Kyril Tidmarsh, 'Litvinov Trial Threat of Exile', *Times*, 11 Oct. 1968, 1; Kyril Tidmarsh, 'Five Years of Exile as Sentence for Litvinov', *Times*, 12 Oct. 1968, 5; via NYT News Service [N.N.], 'Why Dissidents Risked Their Freedom', *Times*, 15 Oct. 1968, 10.

Apparently, his main contact for interviews was Grigorenko, with whom he appears to have spoken regularly in front of the courthouse. Tidmarsh's reports about the October 1968 trial and the accompanying events were supplemented by Reuter news agency reports providing further details on what the protestors were saying. Furthermore, the *Times* printed articles provided by the *NYT* News Service which introduced the vocabulary of dissent by referring to the defendants, the protestors and those who had been on trial earlier as 'dissidents'. The *FAZ* also featured the news prominently on the front pages of its political section.[27] It was via news agency dispatches that the reader learnt about details of the proceedings in and in front of the courthouse in October – containing in a nutshell (although not particularly poignantly) the information the *NYT*- and *Times*-correspondents for their part had embellished with a much more detailed description that was apt to conjure a vivid picture in the reader's mind and therefore last in his memory. More descriptions could be obtained in Frankfurt-based editor Claus Gennrich's articles. Gennrich in turn relied on the Russian-emigrant publishing house Possev, which was also located in Frankfurt, and on the international news agencies, mainly the American UPI. The *FAZ* did not employ the terminology of dissent, but spoke of individuals who were characterized by name and profession and who were introduced as Soviet intellectuals expressing their desire for intellectual freedom.

Apart from the snow and the setting, and apart from a continuity in the general manner in which the trials were conducted, the alert newspaper reader observed notable differences in the increased proximity between the correspondents and the people close to the defendants. This was reflected not only in the passing on of news and documents, but in that the correspondents had become much more attentive to the protesters and well acquainted with several of them. Also, they had become sympathetic in their reporting, as in the recurring citation of Delone's 'three minutes' catchphrase.

Moscow, January 1972

By 1972, the continuous and diligent newspaper readers' breakfast bacon, bagels or Brötchen would have been accompanied by a quite different picture:

[27] Claus Gennrich, 'Prozeß in Moskau gegen Oppositionelle', *FAZ*, 13 Sept. 1968, 3; Claus Gennrich, 'Prozeß im Moskauer Stadtgericht gegen Demonstranten', *FAZ*, 7 Oct. 1968, 3; UPI, 'Handgemenge vor Moskauer Gericht', *FAZ*, 10 Oct. 1968, 5; Claus Gennrich, 'Auseinandersetzungen beim Prozeß gegen Demonstranten', *FAZ*, 11 Oct. 1968, 3; FAZ Moskau, 'Die Urteile im Moskauer Prozeß', *FAZ*, 12 Oct. 1968, 1.

Now, on 5 January 1972, Vladimir Bukovsky, 29 years old, stood trial for alleged anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda. The western press had featured him over the last few years as a dissident intellectual and if the reader was not acquainted with his name, it was certainly not because the press had failed to report on him and his activities. Bukovsky had been in and out of prison and psychiatric hospitals as a political detainee since 1963 for activities the Soviet regime considered illegal. Especially his documentation of the inhumane treatment of sane non-conformist intellectuals who were held in mental institutions and his appeals to western psychiatrists to take action, had gained quite a bit of attention in the west, turning him into a sore spot in the view of the Soviet authorities.

The news coverage on his case intensified in the fall of 1971. For the *NYT*, the American journalists Hedrick Smith and Theodore Shabad provided detailed accounts of the developments.[28] Obviously, they gained their knowledge from first hand sources: when they reported about the upcoming trial (11 Nov. 1971), they referred to reports by 'friends of his family' and 'sources close to his family' within days after Bukovsky's mother had received news about her son from the secret police, indicating close connections between correspondents and friends of the Bukovsky family. The correspondents reported that 'friends of Mr. Bukovsky circulated petitions among western newsmen during the legal pre-trial activities in the hope of stirring foreign interest in the case,' indicating that they (the correspondents as well as the dissidents) were aware of the support international publicity would accord to the defendant and the journalists' role in attaining it (6 Jan. 1972).

The trial itself took place in one day, 5 January 1972, a date almost guaranteeing little attention within the Soviet Union as well as internationally due to the traditional winter holidays. Nevertheless, the correspondents were able to report that 'apparently defiant at today's trial, Mr. Bukovsky declared his regret, according to courtroom sources, that in the few years he had been at liberty "I did so little"' (6 Jan. 1972). Merely a week after the trial, the *NYT* published excerpts of Bukovsky's closing address to the court, as reported by Reuters. In the American press opinion, Bukovsky' detention had 'become a minor cause célèbre among Soviet dissidents and intellectuals concerned with human rights'.

[28] Hedrick Smith, 'Soviet Said to Plan Trial Soon for Dissident Held 7 Months', *NYT*, 11 Nov. 1971; Theodore Shabad, 'Soviet Dissident Convicted – Gets 7 Years and 5 in Exile', *NYT*, 6 Jan. 1972; Special to The New York Times in Moscow, 'A US TV Interview Used in Soviet Trial', *NYT*, 7 Jan. 1972; Reuters, '"Our Society Is Still Sick"', *NYT*, 13 Jan. 1972; Hedrick Smith, 'Tighter Soviet Internal Security Is Seen', *NYT*, 19 Jan. 1972; Hedrick Smith, 'The High Price of Dissent', *NYT*, 13 Feb. 1972.

This time, the London *Times*' reader found the most detailed reports.[29] The British journalist David Bonavia described Bukovsky as a young Russian, whose detention 'had become a cause célèbre among Moscow dissidents' (11 Nov. 1972). He expected the trial to attract wide attention internationally as well as among critical Soviet intellectuals, and expected it to become 'a fresh rallying point for dissident opinion' (11 Nov. 1971). Bonavia cited his information as coming from 'dissident sources' and mostly referred to 'political dissidents' and the 'opposition movement' in his articles.

When on 4 January it finally became known that the trial was to take place the next day, the Reuter news agency men were immediately informed by Bukovsky's friends ('his friends said today' [5 Jan. 1972]) and their dispatches printed in the *Times* on the following day also provided background information about Andrei Sakharov and his co-activists in the Committee on Human Rights in the USSR, which they had founded in 1970 to defend the rights of victims in political trials. Bonavia proceeded to point out the differences in the accounts of the trial between official sources and contradicting unofficial ones. He frequently quoted Bukovsky's allegations against the prosecution that it was not proceeding in accordance with Soviet law and his appeal to the civil rights guaranteed in article 125 of the Soviet constitution which contained the provision for freedom of speech, print, meetings and demonstrations. Indicating the close ties, Bonavia reported: 'The convicted man's friends were too upset this morning to ask for more details [about the trial proceedings] from his mother and sister, who were allowed to attend the proceedings' (6 Jan. 1972). He elaborated: 'His insistence in 1970, soon after his release, on transmitting information about the appalling conditions in the "hospitals" to the outside world is typical of the stubbornness with which he has defended his belief in the need for more justice and democracy in Soviet society.'

Clearly, Bukovsky's providing western journalists with information about psychiatric hospitals where dissidents were detained was considered

[29] David Bonavia, 'Plea by 47 Russians To Free Young Dissident', *Times*, 6 Oct. 1971, 8; Peter Reddaway, 'Soviet Group's Plea to Psychiatrists', *Times*, 23 Oct. 1971, 3; David Bonavia, 'Young Dissident Faces Anti-Soviet Charges', *Times*, 11 Nov. 1971, 6; Peter Reddaway, 'Dispute over Defence Counsel for Dissident's Trial', *Times*, 7 Dec. 1971, 8; David Bonavia, '"Torture" of Dissidents in Russian Hospitals', *Times*, 3 Jan. 1972, 1; Reuter, 'Trial of Dissenter to Open in Moscow Today', *Times*, 5 Jan. 1972, 4; David Bonavia, 'Bukovsky Sentence Shocks Russians', *Times*, 6 Jan. 1972, 1; David Bonavia, 'Defiant Bukovsky Told Court that Spiritual Enlightenment of Soviet Society Had Begun', *Times*, 8 Jan. 1972, 5; David Bonavia, 'The High Price of Intellectual Freedom', *Times*, 10 Jan. 1972, 12; David Bonavia, 'Soviet Drive Against Dissidents', *Times*, 15 Jan. 1972, 4; David Bonavia, 'Swoop by KGB on Flats in Moscow', *Times*, 17 Jan. 1972, 4; David Bonavia, 'How Soviet Justice Dealt with a Dissident', *Times*, 7 Feb. 1972, 1.

his main crime. Moreover, the *Times* reader could develop a vivid picture of the international entanglement at the base of the Bukovsky case as well as of the protest against the verdict: 'It is typical of the present situation that Mr Bukovsky's case commands wider attention in the outside world than it does in Russia, and that the mass of Russians will learn about him, if at all, through western radio broadcasts. But I would be wrong to conclude from this that he and others like him have no importance inside Russia' (10 Jan. 1972). Bonavia and Peter Reddaway, backing him up from London, presented the trial as focusing 'world attention on the question of human rights in the Soviet Union' (10 Jan. 1972).

The *FAZ*-readers found themselves on the side-lines again. The paper's correspondent had extensively covered an earlier trial against Bukovsky in 1967, but now the *FAZ* news coverage was again based on the news agency dispatches of AP, AFP and dpa.[30] These provided information and background but not the personally involved reporting of a newspaper correspondent. However, the news agency personnel apparently had immediate access to direct sources of information. The vocabulary of dissent employed by the Anglo-American news agencies shone through the *FAZ*-coverage and characterized Bukovsky as someone 'considered a political dissident' ('Wie die Mutter des als politischer Dissident geltenden 28jährigen, Frau Nina Bukowski [sic!], am Mittwoch in Moskau bekanntgab […].' [11 Nov. 1971]). The reader could observe that the newsmen often guarded the anonymity of their sources, referring vaguely to 'oppositional circles' ('oppositionelle Kreise') – a precaution that must have appeared to be necessary at a time when they considered Bukovsky being put on trial for his close contacts to western journalists.

Remarkably, none of the western journalists appears to have been at the trial on 5 January, since they were even prevented from entering the street to the courthouse. But there was no need to be there as an eye-witness – detailed information and petitions were reliably accessible anyway. The correspondents interpreted Bukovsky's trial as a warning not to pursue their contacts with Soviet regime critics. The American CBS correspondent who had filmed an interview with Bukovsky on the situation in the psychiatric hospitals in 1970 had already been expelled. Two western correspondents, an American and a Brit working for international news agencies, had been

[30] AP, 'Bukowski jetzt im Gefängnis', *FAZ*, 11 Nov. 1971, 7; AP/AFP, 'Bukowski heute vor Gericht', *FAZ*, 5 Jan. 1972, 3; AFP, 'Hartes Urteil gegen Bukowski', *FAZ*, 6 Jan. 1972, 5; AFP, 'Moskau warnt ausländische Journalisten', *FAZ*, 8 Jan. 1972, 6; dpa, '"Ich bleibe bei meinen Überzeugungen"', *FAZ*, 8 Jan. 1972, 6; FAZ, 'Dokumentation Bukowskijs', *FAZ*, 12 Jan. 1972, 28; Johann Georg Reißmüller, 'Zählebiger Stalinismus', *FAZ*, 19 Jan. 1972, 1; AP, 'Sacharow appelliert an Breschnew', *FAZ*, 22 Jan. 1972, 6; AP, 'Sowjetbürger rufen Waldheim im Fall Bukowski an', *FAZ*, 25 Jan. 1972, 4.

interrogated by the KGB in September 1971 as part of the pre-trial investigations. They were allowed to remain in Moscow but were instructed not to disclose any details about their questionings.

Both events, the expulsion and the KGB interrogations, were judged to be attempts to discourage contacts between the correspondents and the dissidents.[31] In January 1972, both Soviet and western press openly interpreted the trial and the verdict as a warning to western correspondents and to Soviet citizens to avoid contact with each other. It was also seen as an extra-strong warning to Soviet citizens not to disclose information to foreigners on the methods Soviet authorities used to enforce political unanimity within the Soviet Union – a warning that was in vain, as later developments would show.

Leading up to the trial, the correspondents only mentioned that Bukovsky was known to have contacts with correspondents. They only underlined his exceptional role once the verdict was announced, pointing out that he had been one of their most important informers. By now, the Moscow correspondents had established networks and insights that enabled them to go far beyond using the Soviet press as the main source for their reporting, which they had so far had to do due to a lack of other sources. Bonavia, in comparing the official and the unofficial accounts of the trial, drew attention to the fact that 'dissident circles' were compiling a fuller and 'it is believed, more accurate account of the trial'. The compilers, by the way, had 'asked to remain anonymous' (7 Feb. 1972).

So the western reader could perceive that a tightly knit network had evolved, with a certain risk surrounding the involvement of the correspondents. Comments such as Bonavia's provided explicit clarification: 'Even five years ago, the idea of Soviet dissenters makings their protest through the western press startled most people.' He added: 'By now the Western press cannot accommodate the full flood of Soviet protest material because a good deal of it is repetitive, trivial or inadequately documented' (10 Jan. 1972). Moreover, the reader became slowly aware of the fact that some of the correspondents must be meeting with some of the dissidents frequently, informally and without much planning. These, of course, the correspondents did not mention in their articles – but shortly after Bukovsky's trial, an incident made it newsworthy. As Bonavia described it: 'Plain clothes men also forcibly detained my wife and myself this evening as we were leaving Mr Yakir's flat after calling on him to learn details of the searches [of dissidents' flats by the KGB]' (17 Jan. 1972). The extraordinary use of first person pronouns in a news article underlines the active role the jour-

[31] Special to the New York Times in Moscow, 'KGB Questions 2 Western Newsmen on Dissidents', *NYT*, 18 Sept. 1971.

nalists were playing by 1972 when reporting about the dissidents in Moscow.

Conclusion

Summing up, an avid newspaper reader in those years would have noticed how impressed the correspondents were by the fact that they had gained close connections to a group of upright and brave people and by the fact that they were witnessing an astonishing development within the Soviet Union. The impressionistic imagery of their descriptions underlines the authenticity of the reports as well as their amazement in witnessing the events. The recurring references to ice and snow add to this imagery and reinforce the readers' mental image of a freezing Soviet Union – the stereotypical cold in the eastern part of the European continent, the cold in the ambiguous situation of *détente* during the cold war, and the cold of the political situation within the country after the end of the period of 'thaw' under Khrushchev. The mentioning of the cold highlights the bravery of the protestors withstanding ice and snow.

Apart from the recurring cold, western newspaper readers of those years would have perceived that the sense of novelty, uncertainty and analytical insecurity conveyed by the early reporting had been steadily replaced in the course of the following five years by a familiarity with the situation, a proximity to defendants and protestors, and a reliability in channels of information. Instead of reporting what they had read in and between the lines of the Soviet newspapers as was the case up to the 'First Writers' Trial' in 1965/66, the Moscow correspondents were by 1968 providing their readers with extensive and exciting information directly from the source, and by 1972 they were informing their readers about how they needed to scrutinize the mass of information they received from their Soviet acquaintances. By then, the once so fascinating events at the courthouse and in front of the building were hardly newsworthy anymore. Instead, some correspondents stepped into the limelight themselves when they were enduring repression from Soviet authorities for their close relations to the dissident scene.

Clearly, channels of information, personal networks and the trust-based relationships had emerged. This was reflected in the growing speed and extent with which the dissidents' claims and ideas were reproduced in the exact same wording to the western audiences, highlighting a vocabulary of legality and civil rights. In the west, these reports were met by a public opinion preoccupied with similar issues, although in a western context – debates that would have in turn influenced the correspondents' perceptions of the Moscow events. Similarly, the naming of the sources using personal

names must have fallen on fruitful ground in western societies, which, under the impression of détente, were increasingly interested in the societies of the east. These western discourses – while this cannot be proven – are by logic considered as a predisposition to but not causes for the intensification of interest and style of reporting.

Just as any reader of only one newspaper was hardly isolated from information he or she received via other media, friends and colleagues or talk in town, so too the editors of the newspapers hardly worked with only one source. Furthermore, neither did the correspondents themselves expect to be the only sources nor did they rely on only one source of information. Different intensities in reporting by the Moscow correspondents were balanced out by the editors' selection of wire-dispatches which they printed in order to fill in what would otherwise have been gaps. Information about the trials was therefore multi-polar. In the case of the *FAZ*, this multipolarity introduced the terminology and appreciation of dissent before the *FAZ*'s own correspondents employed the concept.

Based on newspaper articles by three major western newspapers and background material on the *NYT*-journalists, this sketch has attempted to draw attention to the fact that those persons producing the newspaper articles were themselves acting within a specific context in time and space. Moscow was an arena for interactions outside preconceived national configurations, a transnational 'space of experience' (*Erfahrungsraum*) par excellence. Within a context of superpower bloc confrontation, internal political developments in the countries of their professional origin, societal upheavals in the east and west along with the evolving discourses, the correspondents had their own experiences within Moscow and conceptualized them for their audiences in the west. As shown, the concept of 'transnationality' opens a new perspective on the history of dissent by focussing on the process of how information is gained, interpreted and transferred. By applying a transnational perspective, the correspondents, their actions and their vocabulary are contextualized in time and in space. This enables us to grasp their interpretive accomplishments in translating the dissident developments under way in the east to their readerships in the west. More abstractly, this perspective obliges historians to explicitly include the news writers' 'space of experience' into the analysis and thereby contextualize the production of knowledge as well as knowledge itself. From this perspective, the contingency of information on dissent and opposition becomes part of the story.[32]

[32] While this paper provides a brief sketch, the Ph.D. project it is based on will analyse the circumstances under which the western correspondents reported from Moscow more extensively.

Nenad Stefanov

'Message in a Bottle'

Yugoslav *Praxis* Philosophy, Critical Theory of Society and the Transfer of Ideas between East and West

'Message in a bottle'. That was how Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno saw the possible impact that their central work, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, published in 1947 might have on society. There was no concrete recipient in mind at that historical moment – dominated by the experience of the National Socialist *Zivilisationsbruch*. Thus, the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* would float along, and maybe the message would at some later time be by chance uncorked. One decade later, the 'bottle' reached a readership; recipients of the message not thought of nor intended: a group of philosophers gathering regularly on an Adriatic island off the coast of Yugoslavia. But how could it happen that Horkheimer and Adorno's bottle would be uncorked, of all places, on a Yugoslav island?

Yugoslavia as a keyword is often connected with violent ethnic conflict, 'the impossibility of different nations living together'. Therefore, Yugoslavia is a preferred topic for theorists who see culture predominantly as a field of ethnic conflict and as a medium of articulating substantial differences. Culture understood as a field of agency is rarely brought into connection with Yugoslavia.

Even a very brief glance at this period shows, however, that defining Yugoslav culture only by ethno-national clashes touches only one dimension of the country's societal development. The dimensions of another concept of culture became visible in the development of a critical public discourse at the beginning of the 1960s.

There are few, if any, historical studies of Yugoslav *Praxis* philosophy and its 'practice' of holding annual summer schools on Korčula, the Adriatic island where the 'message in a bottle' was uncorked. Gradually a new interest is now developing, particularly in the social sciences as well as in

the context of the global historicization of the 1968 protest movement.[1] This essay contributes to this literature not by presenting definite findings, but rather by delineating central aspects which should be the object of closer investigation in the future. Another aim of this article is to underline the significance of a neglected field of analysis of this school: the contact, transfer of ideas and entanglement of intellectual currents between east and west. This article concentrates in particular on the philosophy of critical theory, as developed in the US and West Germany. To avoid the vagueness of the term 'transfer', I will rely on a definition offered by Jürgen Osterhammel. He argues that transfers of ideas or of structures of meaning (*Kulturtransfer*) should be seen as parts of transnational history only if 'the protagonists and institutions of the transfer can be named and documented and if it is possible to correlate specific processes of transfers with identifiable needs, interests and social functions as well as to explain the consequences of these transfers'.[2] With the journal *Praxis* and the discussions that the editorial board was able to generate in Yugoslavia and beyond, such a group of protagonists can be precisely defined.

Analysing the *Praxis* school from the angle of transnational exchanges and connections reveals, on the one side, the specific conditions under which an institutionalization of independent thought was possible in Yugoslavia and, on the other side, the interrelatedness of this process to western European trends of development. The journal *Praxis* and the summer school existed from 1964 to 1974, a period of upheaval in the history of socialist Yugoslavia. This decade witnessed political reforms that lessened party control on all spheres of societal life, the first experiences with a 'Yugoslav way of life', with modest prosperity and the broadening of contacts with the west. It ended with the first experience of economic crisis and a strengthening of authoritarian rule in the mid-seventies, accompanied by a profound federalization of the state. The main question of this contribution is how the transfer of critical theory functioned. The elements of critical theory that were of particular importance for these exchanges can be gleaned from the meetings and discussions on Korčula. The transfer of ideas to a new social context often leads to a creative appropriation and thus modification of those ideas. In addition to a brief sketch of social milieus and inner-Yugoslav entanglements out of which the *Praxis* school

[1] Boris Kanzleiter and Krunoslav Stojaković, eds., *"1968" in Jugoslawien: Studentenproteste und kulturelle Avantgarde zwischen 1960 und 1975: Gespräche und Dokumente* (Bonn: Dietz, 2008); Boris Kanzleiter, *Die "Rote Universität": Studentenbewegung und Linksopposition in Belgrad 1964-1975* (Hamburg: VSA, 2011).

[2] Jürgen Osterhammel, 'Transnationale Gesellschaftsgeschichte: Erweiterung oder Alternative?', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 27, 3 (2001), 464-479, at 477.

emerged, this contribution discusses three possible areas for researching transfers, appropriations, and modifications: the transfers of notions, the institutional dimension of transfer and the individuals involved in transfer and exchange.

Transfers of Notions: *Praxis* – Conception and History

The connection between the critical theory of society and the Yugoslav *Praxis* philosophy is not an arbitrary one that has been constructed *post festum* and inspired by the present boom of approaches focusing on entanglements and transfers. Rather, this connection was already visible in the West German public sphere of the 1970s, the period with a very high awareness of the Yugoslav way of self-management and the *Praxis* school. Thus, the weekly *Der Spiegel* reported that

> In the thoughts of this journal [*Praxis*], the orthodox left reencountered a virus that they had already diagnosed in the shape of the critical theory of the Frankfurt School: the rebellion against their "dialectic materialism" (Diamat) that admits philosophy is only a reflection of the real conditions [der wirklichen Verhältnisse]. […] In contrast to Horkheimer, Adorno and Marcuse, however, the *Praxis* philosophers developed their critique of capitalism and socialism starting in a socialist country. Many of them, like Supek and Vranicki, had fought in the resistance and, after the war, suffered under the "influence of an external power in the name of a prospective freedom" […].[3]

Five years later, one could read in this weekly that 'it was the merit of the *Praxis* circle that Yugoslavia had become a Mecca of democratic socialism for the new left throughout the whole world. It seemed to prove that socialism and freedom are compatible after all'.[4] In this section, I will briefly introduce the societal and political context in which this current, so little appreciated by the orthodox Marxists, appeared on the intellectual scene and point out that transfers and exchanges were at the very core of its way of thinking.

Tito's break with Stalin in 1948 led not only to a forced ideological reorientation which expressed itself in discussions about workers self-management, but also in the rehabilitation of sociology as an academic discipline. Hitherto discredited as 'bourgeois', it was now affirmed as a field of study at Belgrade University.[5] The need to develop a Marxist

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[3] 'Baldachin für Heilige', *Der Spiegel*, 2 Mar. 1970, 169.

[4] 'Der "Praxis-Kreis"', *Der Spiegel*, 3 Feb. 1975, 81.

[5] Nebojša Popov, *Društveni sukobi – izazov sociologije,* 2nd edn. (Beograd: Centar FDT, 1990), 117. The first edition was forbidden in 1983. From 1950 onwards Sociology was taught at the law department.

theory distinct from Soviet ideology provided intellectuals with the opportunity to introduce western philosophical discussions into academic debates in Yugoslavia and to interpret them from out of a Yugoslav context.[6]

Essential for this reorientation were the notions of *alienation* and *Praxis*. Until 1948, Yugoslav theoreticians and party ideologues followed the thesis of dogmatic Marxism that alienation appeared only in capitalist societies. There, workers were separated from their means of production and could control neither the power of their labour nor the product of their work. In socialism the producer disposes freely over the means of production and surplus; thus, the problem of alienation ceases to exist according to this kind of interpretation. In the mid 1950s, the notion of alienation was reassessed in Yugoslavia in order to develop a critique of the growing influence of the state apparatus, namely the Stalinist bureaucracy, which gradually gained independence and alienated itself from society, negating the freedom of the producer. Not the bourgeoisie anymore but rather the state now appropriated the means of production and surplus.

In the evolution of the concepts of this philosophical current, one can observe a transfer and first and foremost an appropriation in the domain of ideas. The philosophers of the *Praxis* circle at that time, beginning in the mid-1950s, became deeply interested in the discussions that followed the 'discovery' of Marx's *Frühschriften* two decades earlier. Particularly Herbert Marcuse wrote about these texts in the 1930s,[7] pointing out the genuine philosophical terminology that seemed to disappear in the later works of Marx – but most of all the term 'alienation' gained attention, strengthening a new approach to Marx as a philosopher.[8]

A wide range of thinkers, beginning with Georg Lukács, Karl Korsch and Ernst Bloch, used the term alienation in their interpretations in order to describe 'forms of consciousness' (*Bewusstseinsformen*) in capitalist societies in which the heteronomy and powerlessness experienced by the atomized individual was perceived as something given by nature and as existing necessarily.[9] The Yugoslav thinkers adopted this interpretation of the notion in order to better understand the dynamics of prejudices and to describe similar phenomena of internalization of domination in a different,

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[6] First texts were written by Mihailo Marković (*Revizija filozofskih osnova marksizma u Sovjetskom Savezu* [Beograd: Naučna knjiga, 1952]) and by Gajo Petrović; cf. Popov, *Društveni sukobi*, 115.

[7] Herbert Marcuse, 'Neue Quellen zur Grundlegung des Historischen Materialismus', *Die Gesellschaft* 9, 2 (1932), 136-174.

[8] Cf. Gajo Petrović, *Marx i Marksisti* (Zagreb: Naprijed and Beograd: Nolit, 1986), 24.

[9] Cf. Georg Lukács, *Geschichte und Klassenbewusstsein: Studien über marxistische Dialektik,* 9th edn. (Darmstadt/ Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1986).

namely, state-socialist context.[10] A transfer of concepts and their appropriation to a particular context occurred.[11] 'Alienation' from the *Frühschriften* served to criticize the destructive potential of socialist state bureaucracy. Emerging out of an adaptation and modification in the Yugoslav intellectual context, this notion was the starting point for the creation of the crucial feature of the new Yugoslav critique: *Praxis*.

In classical 'Diamat' (dialectical materialism), history is seen as evolving according to objective laws with the individual and his actions being reduced to the subjective expression of these objective rules; revolution and the establishment of socialism are seen as resulting from supra-individual necessities.[12] Yugoslav social scientists and philosophers, in contrast, tried to formulate a theoretical counter-proposal to such a conception. This way a systematic possibility could be developed, acknowledging the existence of different interpretations of Marxist thought, as well as a theoretical foundation for the newly introduced workers' self-management, highlighting its universal democratic potential. Such reflection aimed at emphasizing the possibilities of autonomous *Handeln*, and defined 'man' as a free, creative person, creating a new societal reality.

Thus, *Praxis* was chosen as a title for the circle's journal because it best expressed its underlying understanding of philosophy.[13] *Praxis* pointed out the changeability of society and thus centred particularly on the sphere of human action.[14] *Praxis* meant, first of all, seeing man not in an exclusively contemplative relationship towards the objects surrounding him, but as capable of changing them through his action.[15] This aspect of changing and shaping the surrounding world by man, implied that *Praxis* as a notion meant primarily a revolutionary and critical form of action (*Handeln*).

It was not until 1960 that this current of thought could establish itself as at least equal to those Yugoslav theoreticians of Marxism-Leninism who were still attached to the Leninist 'mirror' theory. By this they meant that

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[10] One of the founders of the *Praxis* circle was a particular protagonist of such appropriation. Cf. Predrag Vranicki, 'Marginalien zum Problem des Humanismus', in Predrag Vranicki, ed., *Mensch und Geschichte* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1969), 21; Predrag Vranicki, *Geschichte des Marxismus,* 2 vols (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1983), 1049.

[11] Gerson S. Sher*, Praxis: Marxist Criticism and Dissent in Socialist Yugoslavia* (Bloomington/ London: Indiana University Press, 1977), 66.

[12] Cf. Boris Ziherl, *Dijalektički i istorijski materijalizam*, 2nd vol., Biblioteka Prosvetnih radnika Jugoslavije, Knj. 12 (Beograd: Rad, 1952).

[13] Preface of the Editorial Board of Praxis, 'A qui bon Praxis?', *Praxis International* 17 (1965), 3-9, at 4.

[14] Branko Bošnjak, 'Ime i pojam Praxis', *Praxis* 1 (1964), 7-20, at 17; Gajo Petrović, 'Praksa i Bistvovanje', *Praxis* 1 (1964), 21-34.

[15] Vranicki, 'Marginalien', 29.

cognition – and in immediate connection subjective activity – was necessarily bound to firm rules of 'objective reality'.[16] But by this time, as the attraction of the *Praxis* concept began to grow, the terrain of the discussion had broadened.

The *Praxis* circle opposed particularly all obstacles that prevented the evolvement of man as a 'free creative person'. Initially this led to the critique of the growing superiority of the state and its bureaucratization. The critique was first and foremost directed at the Soviet Union, demonstrating what dangerous effects Stalinist bureaucracy could have. But – as hinted before – the discussions of the *Praxis* circle made clear who it was that was actually being addressed: the relations of power in Yugoslavia where implicitly the issue. With its monopoly of power, the Yugoslav state, established by a revolution, was threatening the achievements of the revolution.

Such a description of the relations of power in Yugoslavia made *alienation* and *praxis* the crucial notions of a Yugoslav critical theory of society. Whereas the first critically re-examined the proclamation of the possibility of liberty in socialism, the second contained a blueprint of emancipation and freedom.

Intellectual Milieus and Yugoslav Entanglements

In 1964, the first number of the journal *Praxis* appeared. A year later the publication of a parallel international edition began.[17] In this latter one, English, French and German translations of the texts in the Yugoslav edition, making up around 70 to 80 per cent of the text, were accompanied by texts from other Yugoslav journals such as *Naše Teme* (Zagreb), *Gledišta* (Belgrade), *Pregled* (Sarajevo).[18]

The history of the journal could be written as a process of inner-Yugoslav entanglements. Its founding was not intended by the state, but came from an autonomous initiative that many party functionaries did not support.[19] Initially, the journal – published by the Croatian Philosophical

[16] Gajo Petrović, 'Praksa i Bistvovanje'.

[17] Gajo Petrović, 'O međunarodnom izdanju "Praxis" (1970 – 1973): Izvještaj Redakcije "Praxis" podnesen na godišnjoj skupštini Saveza filozofskih društava Jugoslavije 29.6.1973 u Ljubljani', *Praxis* 6 (1973), 745-758.

[18] *Ibid.*, 747.

[19] Rudi Supek retrospectivily wrote about the journal and the summer school: 'It had a really all-Yugoslav character, although it was explicitly on voluntary basis to join us and driven exclusively by the wish and the abilities of everyone of us, personally to contribute

Society – ran theoretical blueprints of the 'Zagreb School', personified in the thought of Milan Kangrga, Gajo Petrović, Rudi Supek and Predrag Vranicki. The growing relevance of the journal resulted in the fact that articles from other similarly oriented Yugoslav journals were printed and a joint Yugoslav editorial board was established, composed mostly of theoreticians from Zagreb and Belgrade such as Veljko Korać, Zagorka Golubović, Ljubomir Tadić and Mihailo Marković. From then on, the journal was published by the Yugoslav Philosophical Society.

To some degree, Zagreb and Belgrade could be seen as symbolizing different philosophical traditions. Zagreb stood more for an orientation toward critical theory and ontology; in Belgrade, the philosophy of science and American pragmatism seemed to have a greater attraction. Nevertheless, such a generalization is not helpful in the long run, and it soon reaches its limits. What was, in fact, common ground for all the members of the journal was the effort to relate one's thinking to concepts that were discussed in the west and to ask how far these concepts could explain the contradictions of Yugoslav society. The divergent interpretations and controversies should not be identified primarily with a 'Belgrade' and a 'Zagreb School', as if representing two different concepts. Even less should they be ascribed to two republics representing a 'Croatian' or a 'Serbian' style of a critical approach towards society. The intellectual milieus of both cities were too heterogeneous to construct out of them a particular, homogenous, easily identifiable 'Belgrade' or 'Zagreb style'. *Praxis* provided a general framework for a heterogeneous group of intellectuals who definitely could contradict each other, and often enjoyed it.

Only *post festum* nationalist critics of this school attempted to expose its 'hidden and real' history: Croatian nationalists blamed the most prominent editors, Petrović and Kangrga, for their Serbian origin in order to unmask both a deep lack of 'Croatness' and thus the inherently Great-Serbian and cosmopolitan orientation of *Praxis*. On the other hand, a former member of the *Praxis* circle, Mihailo Marković from Belgrade, was convinced by the 1990s, that his former colleagues from Zagreb were nothing else than Croatian nationalists whose sharp criticism attempted to discredit the 'legitimate Serbian national movement' in the 1980s.[20] Those intellectuals of the *Praxis* circle were predominantly socialized within or in the context of the party structures. The generation of Mihailo Marković and Gajo Petrović had joined the resistance movement during the German occupation, particu-

to theoretical and educational work', Rudi Supek, 'Deset godina Korčulanske Ljetnje Škole', *Praxis* 5-6 (1973), 563-574.

[20] Mihailo Marković and Božidar Jakšić, 'Neobjavljeni intervju: Praxis – kritičko mišljenje i delanje', *Filozofija i društvo* 1 (2010), 3-16.

larly the League of Communist Youth of Yugoslavia, and had become members of the party after the war. The bigger part of the 'bourgeois opposition' was openly suppressed after the war. After 1948, however, and even more so after 1952, the split with the Soviet Union and the abandonment of the Soviet model of societal organization gradually opened a space for critics of Soviet authoritarianism; it also made it possible to found journals and to publish without needing to stick too closely to the party line. Nevertheless, self-conscious, individual criticism remained a risky endeavor. Gajo Petrović was expelled for the first time from the party in 1952 because of 'subjectivist arrogance and inattention towards Stalinist tendencies'. Later he was given his membership card back, only to be again expelled in 1968. He himself declined several later invitations to join the party again.[21] With the exception of Milan Kangrga, who never joined the party, the other intellectuals from the *Praxis* circle, although party members, were not trusted by their comrades as reliable.

Institutions of Transfer and Exchanges: The Journal and Summer School

The emphasis on finding audiences and generating discussions outside Yugoslavia was a genuine element of the theoretical orientation of the *Praxis* school. In the perceptions of the members of the editorial board, critique and emancipation were components of a common universal process. The aim to critically define societal contradictions in Yugoslavia was to be achieved in a broader discussion of those ideas in a universal perspective:

> The aim of the international edition is not the "representation" of Yugoslav thought abroad, but the stimulation of international philosophical collaboration in the debate on the decisive questions of our time. […] This way we represent Yugoslav philosophy as participants in the global happenings and not as a national specialty, satisfying the needs of an eccentric view from outside.[22]

The goal of the international edition was not the kind of representation or exhibition that characterized international scientific conferences between east and west, which served exclusively to demonstrate the pure and intact spirit of each side. The editors aimed at something entirely different. They were interested in an exchange; they wanted to discuss the possibility of

[21] Asja Petrović, Branko Bošnjak, et al., eds., *Zbilja i kritika posvećeno Gaji Petroviću* (Zagreb: Antibarbarus 2001), 4.

[22] Petrović, 'O međunarordnom izdanju', 751.

analyzing societal development in east and west critically as well as to participate in discussions as to what kind of notions could serve such an analysis best. *Praxis* understood itself as a forum beyond states for all those intellectuals who shared the mentioned perspective on society, and who saw themselves not as 'representatives' of a 'national school'. What the term 'transnational' would define today was an integral part of their intellectual endeavour: going beyond national boundaries, a discussion should be initiated about social change.

The international editorial board reflected this interest in transcending the limits of a world divided into east and west. It was comprised of nearly all relevant intellectuals who were interested in a Marxist philosophy beyond Stalinist dogmatism, or for whom Marx served as a point of departure for a critical revision of his concepts and for initiating a new mode of reflection about society. It ranged from Herbert Marcuse and Jürgen Habermas to Lucien Goldmann and later also to Zygmunt Bauman.

The, so to speak, sensual – or Dionysian – basis of the international journal's experiences were meetings on the Adriatic island of Korčula which took place every year in August between 1963 and 1974. Not only the members of the international editorial board participated in this summer school. The sessions were also attended by intellectuals and philosophers who usually did not have that much in common with Marxist Philosophy such as Eugen Fink, Hans-Georg Gadamer and Karl Löwith.

The summer school did not just invite prominent scholars and intellectuals. Students from abroad were also present in considerable numbers (up to 500 attended in 1968).[23] The central aim of the summer school for the *Praxis* philosophers was to extend discussions beyond the exchange of letters and take them to the level of direct communication.[24] This kind of communication was stabilized by publishing the majority of the contributions annually in the journal – of course, in French, German and English. At the same time – usually at the end of a summer session – a topic which had crystallized that year during the discussions in the panels and seminars was chosen as the main issue for the next year. The joint sessions of the international editorial board, as it decided together on the forthcoming issue, illustrate vividly the ways of entanglement within *Praxis*.

The summer school did not remain within the bounds of academic routine. Supek formulated it this way: 'instead of academic instruction in

[23] Nebojša Popov, et al., eds., *Sloboda i nasilje, razgovor o časopisu Praxis i korčulanskoj letnjoj školi* (Beograd: Res publica, 2003), 75.

[24] This school was founded out of the desire, to become acquainted with more distant regions of theory, to come in direct touch with the most modern and progressive thinkers and scientists, cf. Petrović, 'O međunarodnom izdanju', 567.

questions of education in a narrow sense, Korčula grew to be a societal happening, an origin of action of thought, going far beyond its formal limits'.[25] This was inherent in the summer school's 'principles', as Supek called them. A self-understanding of the participants became visible as 'deeply engaged persons, and not as disciplined functionaries'.[26] The openness towards different Marxian and other theoretical orientations, and also towards 'new ideas' that emerged in both western and eastern Europe was essential for this kind of self-understanding.[27] Therefore, the conveners invited individual persons and not – as it was a usual custom at official congresses – national or state delegations. Thus Supek explained the fact that in the ten years in which the summer school took place, there were participants from Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania and Hungary, but not a single philosopher from Bulgaria or the Soviet Union at the meetings on the Adriatic island.[28] The latter two preferred to send delegations and not individual persons to represent the 'newest achievements' on the field of philosophy in their countries. For Supek, it was important for the summer school to contribute not just to a better understanding of the newest trends of social theory in Yugoslavia or to introduce solely *Praxis* philosophy to the participants from abroad. Of equal importance was to initiate communication among the participants from western Europe who in their own 'home' context sometimes could view one another as opponents or as members of ideologically opposed currents. The challenge to enable understanding despite the various different languages and the lack of translators resulted in sections that were organized by language.

Those panels at times tended to reproduce (at least in the afternoon, whereas in the morning there were joint panels) local cultures of debate within this transnational context, as Arnold Künzli noted during the summer school in 1970: 'Thus, in the French section a passionate debate went on, whereas the section in English language discussed in complete serenity questions about Positivism and Leninism, while the German section grappled with the topic "Hegel"'.[29] The history both of the summer school and of the journal can be divided in three different phases: the first was from 1963-1968 when a 'humanist Marxism' from a Yugoslav perspective stood in the foreground, with a strong relationship to Ernst Bloch, who regularly

[25] Ibid., 564.

[26] Ibid., 565.

[27] Ibid., 569.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Arnold Künzli, 'Verstörter Weltgeist auf Korčula: Zur 7. Internationalen Sommerschule der jugoslawischen "Praxis" Philosophen', *Gewerkschaftliche Monatshefte* 21, 10 (1970), 608-614, at 610.

joined the meetings at Korčula and wrote about *Praxis* for a broader audience – for instance in the weekly *Der Spiegel*.

The year 1968 symbolizes a kind of hinge between two distinctive periods. At the summer school of 1968, when the participants – with Jürgen Habermas and Herbert Marcuse among them – were informed about the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, the limits of a humanist socialism were exposed, with a sobering effect. At the same time, the student rebellions in the US and Europe and their possible emancipatory potential drew everyone's attention. This contradiction between a scepticism concerning the possibility of emancipation within the 'real socialist' states and the debates related to the system-changing potential of the new protest movements, which no longer fit the old class-struggle scheme, dominated the following meetings on Korčula until the summer school was held for the last time in 1974.

In the issues of *Praxis* and at the summer school, the analysis of the new social movements as a global phenomenon came to the fore. On the other hand, a younger generation – represented by Nebojša Popov and Božidar Jakšić – was developing from a sociological perspective an innovative and explicitly critical analysis of the conflicts and contradictions in Yugoslav society. In contrast to the previous dominance of texts, which centred on an optimistic version of *Praxis* philosophy, the number of contributions to the journal grew which tried to figure out the new risks and threats connected with the newly emerging nationalism in Yugoslav society. This topic, then, characterized the third phase of *Praxis* when the conflict with the party officials, which had accompanied the publication of the journal since its beginnings, intensified.

The relationship between the party and *Praxis*, too, went through three different stages. It can be summarized briefly in the following way: First there was considerable scepticism and a fierce critique in the Yugoslav media towards *Praxis* predominantly from dogmatic currents. Although scepticism never ceased, in the years until 1968, it moved into the background, because of the international acknowledgement the journal and the summer school received. After 1968, it was particularly the federal level of the party which turned to open repression, considering the *Praxis* circle responsible for the student revolt in the Yugoslav capitals. The imprisonment of Božidar Jakšič was the first sign, followed in 1974 by the shutting down of the journal and summer school, and culminating in 1975 with the expulsion of seven professors and docents from Belgrade University who were members of the *Praxis* circle.

Transfers and Demarcations – a Biographical Approach: Gajo Petrović

The steadily growing pressure, however, did not succeed in limiting the impact of *Praxis* on the Yugoslav intelligentsia or abroad. Actually it was to the contrary, as the following passage will show. One way of approaching the history of contacts, interrelations and transfers is through a biographical perspective. This helps to illustrate the specific position of intellectuals in Yugoslavia and their starting framework for transnational communication. This section, therefore, briefly sketches the career of someone mentioned previously: Gajo Petrović (1927–1993). Petrović was one of *Praxis'* editors-in-chief for an entire decade. Moreover, his intellectual biography is typical for the life story of a number of *Praxis* intellectuals as well as for the way *Praxis* entanglements worked – although the very different, heterogeneous theoretical concepts of each individual scholar should be kept in mind. What is important here is how contacts to intellectuals abroad were established and maintained.

Soon after the end of the war, Petrović, a participant in the liberation movement and prospective student of philosophy, went to study for two years in the Soviet Union. He was sent in 1946 to Leningrad and Moscow and returned in 1948, when the relations between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union seriously deteriorated. His correspondence and later published articles about his experiences there demonstrate that, from the very beginning of his stay, he had a distanced view of the Soviet Union and of the role philosophy was expected to play in this society.[30] Thus, when he intensified his contacts to western scholars, Petrović had already had an in-depth experience of the Soviet way of life and thinking. In 1957 he was invited by Alfred Ayer to conduct research in England on a one year grant. It was there that Petrović became acquainted with analytical philosophy.

In 1961 Petrović received a grant from the Ford Foundation, enabling him to establish close ties to American scholars and particularly to Erich Fromm, which also brought the beginning of a lifelong friendship.[31] The contacts to intellectuals in Western Germany were established and intensified through several grants by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, particularly in the 1970s.[32] Another way of establishing international contacts was through book reviews. Robert C. Tucker describes how he got in contact with the *Praxis* circle. Attracted by the idea of a Yugoslav journal dealing with global issues, he began reading it with curiosity:

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[30] Asja Petrović, *Gajo Petrović*, 2.

[31] *Ibid.*, 5.

[32] *Ibid.*, 7.

> To my great surprise, when I opened the edition for 1965, I found on its pages a review of my book "Philosophy and Myth in Karl Marx", published in 1961. I was surprised by the friendly although not uncritical approach of Petrović towards my book. As I already knew Gajo Petrović intellectually through this review in *Praxis* 1965, I got to know him personally the next year, when we both participated in a conference at Notre Dame University in the US.[33]

Thus began an intellectual friendship. The manner in which it was established was typical for the whole *Praxis* circle.

The *Praxis* School's Reception of Critical Theory

Critical theory will serve as an example for the content of the transferred and appropriated ideas. It was particularly the early concepts of critical theory and their influence, visible in the works of Herbert Marcuse, Erich Fromm and Max Horkheimer,[34] that were increasingly gaining importance at the beginning of the 1960s.[35] The interest in this kind of critique of societal development was not limited to a small circle of intellectuals.[36]

The philosophers around *Praxis* published Serbo-Croatian translations of significant works of critical theory. Beginning in 1965, it was predominantly the books of Herbert Marcuse which were published, starting with *Eros and Civilisation*.[37] With remarkable timing, *One-Dimensional Man*

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[33] Robert C. Tucker, 'Gajo Petrović i humanistički marxizam', in Asja Petrović, *Gajo Petrović*, 27.

[34] Cf. John Abromeit, *Max Horkheimer and the Foundations of the Frankfurt School* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

[35] Gajo Petrović, 'Die Frankfurter Schule und die Zagreber Philosophie der Praxis', in Axel Honneth and Albrecht Wellmer, eds., *Die Frankfurter Schule und die Folgen* (Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1986), 59-88, at 61.

[36] 'Generally it must be stated that the "Frankfurt School" pushed doors open. This connection of Marxism and Psychoanalysis brought us new insights'. Interview with Alija Hodžić, 'Die Interpretation allein ist schon ein Ereignis', in Kanzleiter and Stojaković, eds, *"1968" in Jugoslawien*, 60.

[37] Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilisation* (1965); *Reason and Revolution* (1966); *One-Dimensional Man* (1968); *Das Ende der Utopie: An Essay on Liberation* (1972); *Kultur und Gesellschaft* (1977); *Counterrevolution and Revolt* (1979); *Estetska dimenzija [Ästhetische Dimension: 10 Texte zur Kunst und Kultur]*, (1981); *Hegels Ontologie und die Grundlegung einer Theorie der Geschichtlichkeit* (1981); *Prilozi za fenomenologiju historijskog materijalizma* [*Beiträge zu einer Phänomenologie des Historischen Materialismus*] (1982), *Soviet Marxism* (1982); with Robert P. Wolff and Barrington Moore, *A Critique of Pure Tolerance* (1984). Theodor W. Adorno, *Philosophie der neuen Musik* (1968); *Drei Studien zu Hegel* (1972); *Jargon der Eigentlichkeit* (1978); *Negative Dialektik* (1979); *Filozofsko-socioloski eseji o knjizevnosti [Philosophisch-soziologische Essays über die Literatur]*, (1985). Max Horkheimer, *Eclipse of Reason* (1963); *Traditionelle und kritische Theorie*

was published exactly in June 1968. A more intensive discussion of Horkheimer and Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment* developed during the 1970s.[38]

In 1982, Gajo Petrović defined the relationship between the different representatives of critical theory as asymmetrical.

> Within this outlook at the end of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s the Frankfurt School was discovered as the older sister who had been overlooked at the beginning. It was an admirable elder sister with manifold talents that had already seen and understood some important problems which had only recently been noticed by the younger sister. The older one had well before already achieved many meaningful insights, for which the Zagreb philosophers needed to expend great efforts to achieve themselves. The fascination was decidedly great, comparable only to that which accompanied the discovery of Ernst Bloch at the end of the 1950s. From this time on, the Frankfurt School remained for the Zagreb *Praxis* philosophers (and naturally for other philosophers from Yugoslavia) a permanent source of instruction and inspiration.[39]

The image of the two sisters which Gajo Petrović uses here highlights a common point of departure: a critical revision of classical Marxism. But it also hints at different paths to achieve this aim. Among others, Critical Theory developed out of a rejection of philosophy as a system of thought without connection to societal experience. In his early works, Horkheimer dismissed academic philosophy or an understanding of philosophy as a completely detached 'queen of all other sciences'.[40] In Yugoslavia, in contrast, an insistence on a classical understanding of philosophy served to preserve the possibility of autonomous thinking; it was directed against the transformation of the philosophical dimension of Marxian thought into a doctrine legitimating power.

The different attitudes towards classical philosophy did not necessarily evolve out of different theoretical premises, but out of different social

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(1976); *Kritische Theorie*, 2 vols (1982). Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialektik der Aufklärung* (1974); *Soziologische Exkurse* (1980). Walter Benjamin, *Eseji* [Essays] (1974); *Zur Kritik der Gewalt* (1976). Jürgen Habermas, *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit* (1969); *Erkenntnis und Interesse* (1975); *Theorie und Praxis* (Beograd 1980); *Legitimationsprobleme im Spätkapitalismus* (1982); *Zur Rekonstruktion des Historischen Materialismus* (1985). Alfred Schmidt, *Geschichte und Struktur* (1976); *Begriff der Natur in der Lehre von Marx* (1981); with Gian E. Rusconi, *Die Frankfurter Schule* (1974). Franz Neumann, *The Democratic and the Authoritarian State* (1980). Cited after Gajo Petrović, 'Die Frankfurter Schule', 85.

[38] Cf. Nadežda Čačinović-Puhovski, 'Die Dialektik der Aufklärung und die aufgeklärte Dialektik', *Praxis* 2-3 (1973), 253-270.

[39] Gajo Petrović, 'Die Frankfurter Schule', 68.

[40] John Abromeit, *Max Horkheimer*, 52.

experience. While both modes of reflection shared a common non-dogmatic Marxian approach towards societal experience as crucial for the development of theory, the different societal contexts and epochs led them to different conclusions concerning the place of philosophy in society. It is instructive that the closest dialogue was maintained with Herbert Marcuse, who, in the early stage of his theoretical reflections, had been attracted by Heidegger, but then gradually (particularly in the 1930s) lost any interest in this direction.[41] Also Jürgen Habermas was a regular guest at the summer school on Korčula. No ongoing personal contact was established with the authors of the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*.[42] Particularly Alfred Schmidt, one of the representatives of the younger generation, remained highly reserved about the theoretical foundations of *Praxis* philosophy, although the editors of *Praxis* tried to set up a dialogue with him with a review of his thesis in the very first issue of the international edition, which shows the importance of his work for the Yugoslavs:

> With more sympathy than appreciation, the older sister observed the theoretical attempts by the younger one. She observed with affectionate concern the repetition of errors of her own youth (particularly the so called 'error of the young Marcuse'). Thus, sometimes the Zagreb philosophy of *Praxis* was viewed as a phenomenological variant of Marxism, sometimes as a Heidegger-izing of Marx, and sometimes also as an anthropocentric philosophy, which by pretending a de-stalinization, threw overboard essential positions of Marxism.[43]

The reasons for this asymmetry could be found, first of all, in the question of how far a particular understanding of philosophy was acceptable to Critical Theory. This difference, however, did not touch the shared understanding of a necessary public engagement by a critical intellectual. Also,

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[41] Cf. John Abromeit, 'Left Heideggerianism or Phenomenological Marxism? Revisiting Herbert Marcuse's Critical Theory of Technology', *Constellations* 17, 1 (2010), 87-106.

[42] Max Horkheimer was already in retirement. Adorno politely expressed his inability at the moment to join the summer school, when he was invited during a personal conversation with Gajo Petrović in Frankfurt 1967. The latter was at this time a Humboldt-Fellow in Frankfurt. 'In a talk I had with Adorno in the Institute for Social Research in December 1967 and that had a quite diplomatic character, because Adorno was trying to be very polite and gentle and I myself was trying to convince him to join our summer school, Adorno assured me, that he was reading the journal praxis with great interest and that he would really like to come to Korčula. But he immediately apologized, that he couldn´t participate at the coming conference (in Summer 1968). He assured me, that we would come in 1969 to Korčula. I can´t precisely remember, if he was invited in 1969 and how he answered. However he didn´t participate in the summer school in 1969 (and he couldn´t), because he died on 6th of August 1969, two weeks before the summer school should begin'. Gajo Petrović, 'Die Frankfurter Schule', 69.

[43] Gajo Petrović, 'Die Frankfurter Schule', 68.

in general, Gajo Petrović spoke in his conclusion of a 'critical appropriation' beyond 'the named differences'.[44] Petrović presented this retrospect at a meeting in Germany, organized by Albrecht Wellmer and Axel Honneth. Despite all the differences concerning the theoretical approach, contacts continued far beyond the existence of the summer school. As Habermas looked back on the relationship to *Praxis*, there were indeed differences in the conception and understanding of theory; nevertheless, the understanding of public intellectual *Praxis* and the need for a critical examination of a theory of society were shared by both.[45]

Instead of a Conclusion: Further Perspectives on Researching *Praxis*

These differences concerning the approach to and understanding of theory were characteristic predominantly for the first generation of *Praxis* philosophers in Yugoslavia. The younger generation was not that bound to the notion of *Praxis* and was also in closer touch with the concepts of critical theory, particular in the more articulated interest in sociology as mentioned above. It can be said that an intensive but ambivalent relationship, visible in the first generation, was put on a more stable basis by the younger generation, particularly by Žarko Puhovski and Gvozden Flego in Zagreb and Nebojša Popov, Miladin Životić and others in Belgrade. This intensive exchange evolved into a paradox: particularly after the end of the journal, east-west contacts were intensified by the younger generation,[46] but – at least in the German context – they actually did not lead to a better conceptual comprehension of the Yugoslav peculiarities.

On the other hand, since the prohibition of *Praxis* in 1974, a forum for the exchange of theoretical concepts was missing in which a critical reinterpretation of the experiences of the last decade could be undertaken. Therefore, other international journals and meetings offered possibilities for discussion. It seems, however, that they were used primarily by the elder generation of Yugoslav philosophers to reassure themselves of the validity of the categories that had been used up to that point. This at least seems to have been the case with Mihailo Marković: His concepts of an integral self-management in an egalitarian outlook did not change during the two de-

[44] Ibid., 88.

[45] Gajo.

[46] Cf. Gvozden Flego, ed., *Herbert Marcuse – Eros und Emanzipation: Marcuse-Symposion 1988 in Dubrovnik* (Giessen: Germinal Verlag, 1989), and numerous other editions of the Dubrovnik Symposions.

cades since its appearance until they were transformed more or less in a voluntary act into the ideological foundation of the re-named Serbian League of Communists in 1989. While Marković's case is an exception, it does hint at a particular phenomenon: the changes in Yugoslavia – the strengthening of authoritarianism after 1974 in particular – did not lead to the same kind of reconsideration of theoretical concepts that the failure of reform socialism had initiated in Poland, for instance.[47] On the contrary, the *Praxis* philosophers primarily sought to secure their theoretical achievements and to reassure themselves of their validity.

This may also be one factor for a desideratum particularly criticized recently by the *Praxis* member Gajo Sekulić: the lack of an orientation towards democratic theory. It is indicative that in the 1970s and 1980s Jürgen Habermas was a reference person for questions regarding the organization of science, but he was less inspiring with regard to theory.[48] Sekulić sees this deficit as a crucial one for theory-building in Yugoslavia. The critique of growing bureaucratization and the possibilities of self-liberation stood in the foreground. In their critique of the shapes of domination, the Yugoslav theoreticians of society neglected to draw more precisely on the possibilities of the constitution of democratic procedures – beyond reiterating the importance of expanding the sphere of workers self-management.[49]

This gap in the reflections of the *Praxis* circle could be – as a suggestion – discussed in a transnational perspective: the new left in western Europe, too, was confronted with challenges. On the one hand left-wing terrorism in the 1970s and on the other 'new social movements' starting at the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s. A theoretical reflection on these new experiences began only gradually. While the former *Praxis* members had this problem in common with their western friends, the focus of analysis of the new generation, if they dealt explicitly with societal development, was on analysing power structures and conflicts in Yugoslavia. Nebojša Popov's study of *Društveni sukobi* [Conflicts in Society][50] could have been

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[47] Agnes Arndt, 'Der Bedeutungsverlust des Marxismus in transnationaler Perspektive: "Histoire Croisée" als Ansatz und Anspruch an eine Beziehungsgeschichte West- und Ostmitteleuropas', in Agnes Arndt, Joachim Häberlen, Christiane Reinecke, eds., V*ergleichen, Verflechten, Verwirren? Europäische Geschichtsschreibung zwischen Theorie und Praxis* (Göttingen: Vandenhoek & Ruprecht, 2011), 89-114.

[48] Of course this began to change in the mid-1980s, when the translation of works of Habermas intensified.

[49] Gajo Sekulić, 'Pogovor: Nelagoda u Filozofiji – Milan Kangrga i spekulativna prevladavanja filozofije kao metafizike', in Milan Kangrga, *Spekulacija i filozofija: Od Fichtea do Marxa*, (Beograd: Službeni glasni, 2010), 422-450.

[50] Popov, *Društveni sukobi*.

a turning point in the direction of another kind of theory taking democracy theory more seriously into account – but unfortunately this profound study based on empirical research was banned and the copies of the book confiscated and destroyed. It is significant that the book was republished only in 1989.[51] Like this observation, this essay, too, should serve primarily as a preliminary consideration of possible fields or research, because of the fact, that up to now there has been almost no research (with a few exceptions) about this phenomenon.[52] Thus, tis article merely sought to sketch the most promising possibilities of conceptualizing the history of the Yugoslav intellectual public as a history of the transfers of ideas and the entanglements of intellectual milieus in eastern and western Europe.

This is not at all the kind of 'eccentric occupation', which Gajo Petrović distrusted so much. On the contrary: an evaluation and a search for possible foundations of civil society in these parts of Europe, particularly a reconsideration of this intellectual tradition would be of particular value. Even a short glance at the surface can show that the greater part of the movement for peacefully resolving the Yugoslav crisis in the 1980s, and the following anti-war movement, as well as the protagonists of civil societies in our time mostly have either a biographical background or were intellectually socialized in the theoretical framework set up in the 1960s and 1970s around *Praxis* and numerous other journals. Also the protagonists of *Praxis* contributed to a great extent to the understanding of the destruction of Yugoslav society and the war of the 1990s that were not based on essentialist understandings of ethnic identity. These interpretations were important points of departure for the analysis of the war in western societies – anticipating a further field of research in which one could speak of a re-transfer.[53] Thus the general quest for traces of traditions of civil orientation in the Balkan societies becomes at the same time the necessary point of departure to reconsider the legacy of critical thought in the societies which were formed after the breakup of Yugoslavia.

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[51] The book was finished in 1978. After difficulties in raising money for printing, it was sent only in 1983 to the printing house, where it was then confiscated, see: Nebojša Popov, *Contra Fatum: Slučaj grupe profesora Filozofskog fakulteta u Beogradu 1968-1988* (Beograd: Mladost, 1989), 377.

[52] Kanzleiter and Stojaković, *"1968" in Jugoslawien*; Kanzleiter, *Die "Rote Universität"*.

[53] Cf. Nebojša Popov, ed., *Srpska strana rata: Trauma i katarza u istorijskom pamćenju* (Beograd: Republika, 1996); see also the translations: Drinka Gojković and Nebojša Popov, *The Road to War in Serbia: Trauma and Catharsis* (Budapest/ New York: Central University Press, 1998); Thomas Bremer, Nebojša Popov, Heinz-Günther Stobbe, eds., *Serbiens Weg in den Krieg: Kollektive Erinnerung, nationale Formierung und ideologische Aufrüstung* (Berlin: Berlin Verlag 1998).

III. Dissent, Détente and Human Rights

WANDA JARZĄBEK

AN ESCALATING PROBLEM

THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF POLAND AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CSCE PROCESS, 1975-1983

Since the second world war, human rights have increasingly attracted the attention of various social groups. Their definition has become broader and more detailed and, most importantly, attempts have been made to guarantee them not only country by country, but also through international legislation and other international commitments.

Governments across the communist bloc, true to their system's ideological precepts, focussed on what they saw as social rights. Individual freedoms and especially political rights were treated as subordinate to these social and collective rights. The thinking of the decision-makers in People's Poland, too, was heavily burdened by communist doctrine and although the country's constitution frequently served as a mere façade which the government treated instrumentally, it nonetheless expressed a distinct political philosophy giving precedence to collective rights: The preamble to the constitution read that the state is to be a 'republic of the working people' (and not of all citizens), whose power is founded on an 'alliance of the working class and the working peasantry'. The People's Republic of Poland was to attain and develop a 'socialist democracy' (art. 7), and its laws 'expressed the interests and the will of the working people' (art. 8). The constitution generally presented the rights and duties of citizens in the systemic context of the state, as it did the freedoms of expression, publication, assembly, marches and demonstrations.[1]

The Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), which after years of preparations convened on 3 July 1973 in Helsinki, introduced broadly defined human rights into great power politics on an unprecedented

[1] Konstytucja Polskiej Rzeczpospolitej Ludowej uchwalona przez Sejm Ustawodawczy w dniu 22 lipca 1952 r. Jednolity tekst z dnia 16 lutego 1976 r., Dziennik Ustaw nr 7, poz. 36.

scale.[2] In its talks, human rights appeared as a bargaining chip: The USSR only agreed to include them in the final document produced by the conference because otherwise the United States and the other western countries would not have accepted the document's provisions recognising the political and territorial status quo in Europe – though it has to be noted that the latter did not mean that changes in the status quo would be out of the question. The Helsinki Final Act took into account the protection of human rights both in the Declaration of Principles and in the thematic provisions.[3] To be sure, the Final Act was an international agreement and not an international treaty; fulfilling its commitments relied on its signatories' good will. The political realities of 1975, however, proved that it could also have a practical effect – if the political will was there. Thus, the west began to take advantage of cases of implementation and violation of the agreement's human rights provisions to formulate their policies towards the states of eastern Europe. This article intends to demonstrate the impact of this western strategy on domestic developments in Poland and on its government's decisions.

The Domestic Situation, the CSCE and Human Rights in International Relations

In the 1970s, Poland witnessed growing social unrest and the emergence of a number of new organised opposition groups. This was unquestionably influenced by (to use communist terminology) both turbulence in the 'base', i.e. the declining economy, and problems with the 'superstructure', i.e., growing popular dissatisfaction with the regime itself. First Secretary Władysław Gomułka had been removed from power in December 1970 after a series of strikes and the government's ensuing massacre of workers in the coastal cities. Replacing him was Edward Gierek, whose star had been rising in the party, most visibly since 1968.[4] Once in power, the new

[2] Daniel C. Thomas, *The Helsinki Effect: International Norms, Human Rights, and the Demise of Communism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Sarah B. Snyder, *Human Rights Activism and the End of the Cold War: A Transnational History of the Helsinki Network* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

[3] Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, Final Act, available at www.osce.org/mc/39501?download=true (last visited 15 July 2013). Principle VII of the Declaration was entitled 'Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief' and the relevant chapter was entitled 'Co-operation in Humanitarian and Other Fields'.

[4] Jerzy Eisler, *Grudzień 1970: Geneza, przebieg, konsekwencje* (Warszawa: PWN, 2000).

Polish leadership – the so-called 'Gierek team' (*ekipa Gierkowska*) – bandied about slogans of opening Poland to the west, modernising the country, creating prosperity and turning Poland into a second Japan. There is no doubt that Gierek's economic policies in the short term raised the average person's standard of living, bringing improvements in everyday life and making consumer goods available, which unquestionably influenced the population's approval of the regime.[5] Soon, however, problems began to emerge, both those stemming from the inherent characteristics of the system and those caused by current economic mistakes. From the authorities' perspective, the swelling foreign debt was playing an especially negative role.[6]

Public dissatisfaction with the regime manifested itself in criticism of economic policies as well as of the system's founding principles or of the powerful ideological pressures in areas such as education. In 1975, protests over changes being planned for the constitution became an important landmark in the birth of a progressively organised opposition to government policy. The protesters questioned the phrasing of the changes, which were to affix Poland's alliance with the USSR in the constitution and to include a phrase about the communist party's leading role. They also challenged the close connection being made between civil rights and obligations towards the state, as well as the mention of raising young people in the socialist spirit. Protest letters were sent to the authorities, and many demanded the creation of a parliamentary democracy. The Catholic church also spoke up against the changes. These numerous voices of protest were a new experience for the Gierek team, and could have served as a warning – but were probably not heard as such. The government tempered its proposal, but nonetheless, on 10 February 1976, amended the constitution.[7]

New groups challenging real socialism surfaced. After the government ruthlessly suppressed strikes in 1976, people representing various milieux of the intelligentsia formed a committee to provide assistance for workers suffering repression. While some of its members had wanted to call this group the Committee for the Defence of Human and Civic Rights and to use the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as its founding principle, it

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[5] Łukasz Dwilewicz, 'Polityka gospodarcza a spokój społeczny: Posunięcia władz partyjnych i państwowych od grudnia 1970 do grudnia 1971', in Elżbieta Kościk, Tomasz Głowiński, eds., *Gospodarka i społeczeństwo w czasach PRL-u (1944-1989)*, (Wrocław: GAJT 2007), 333-353, at 333-334.

[6] Leszek J. Jasiński, *Bliżej centrum czy na peryferiach? Polskie kontakty gospodarcze z zagranicą w XX w.* (Warszawa: Centrum Europejskie Natolin, Trio 2011), 253.

[7] Cf. Peter Raina, *Rozmowy biskupa Dąbrowskiego z władzami PRL* (Olsztyn: Warmińskie Wydawnictwo Diecezjalne, 1998), 232-233.

was decided to adopt the name Workers' Defence Committee (*Komitet Obrony Robotników*) instead.[8] A few months later, a second opposition group – the Movement for the Defence of Human and Civil Rights (*Ruch Obrony Praw Człowieka i Obywatela*) – came into being, followed by the Young Poland Movement (*Ruch Młodej Polski*) in 1978. In 1979 the Confederation for an Independent Poland (*Konfederacja Polski Niepodległej*) was the first opposition group to define itself as a political party.[9] Though representing different ideological orientations, these groups shared a specific political strategy: they operated in plain sight, making their existence and their membership public, and only keeping secret their ties to organisations engaged in publishing and collecting funds to support their activity. In 1978 so-called Founding Committees of Free Trade Unions (*Komitet Założycielski Wolnych Związków Zawodowych*) were created in Katowice and Gdańsk; those in Gdańsk maintained contacts with intelligentsia organisations. This period also saw the development of a publishing movement. It put out periodicals about social, political and literary issues, as well as books, both Polish, some of which had been rejected by the censor's office, and translations of foreign literature, such as Günter Grass's *The Tin Drum*, Bohumil Hrabal's *Too Loud a Solitude* and George Orwell's *Animal Farm*.

These developments were supported by members of the Polish diaspora abroad: Following the second world war, hundreds of thousands of Poles had remained in the west, most in the United States, France and Britain, where some of them published Polish-language literature, journals and newspapers. One of the most influential of these émigré publications was the monthly *Kultura*, published in Paris, which became an important outlet for independent political thought. Using various routes, these publications were brought to Poland.

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[8] Andrzej Friszke, *Czas KOR-u: Jacek Kuroń a geneza Solidarności* (Kraków: Znak, ISP PAN, 2011), 114-115; Jan Józef Lipski, *KOR: Komitet Obrony Robotników*, with an introd. by Andrzej Friszke, Warszawa 2004.

[9] There is a rich literature about the history of popular resistance and opposition, which includes both monographs and collections of documents. Andrzej Anusz, Łukasz Perzyna, *Konfederacja: Rzecz o KPN* (Warszawa: Wspólnota Samorządowa Województwa Mazowieckiego, 2009); Andrzej Friszke, *Opozycja polityczna w PRL 1945-1980* (London: Aneks, 1994); Paweł Sasanka, *Czerwiec 1976: Geneza, przebieg, konsekwencje* (Warszawa: IPN, 2006); Grzegorz Waligóra, *Ruch Obrony Praw Człowieka i Obywatela 1977-1981* (Warszawa: IPN, 2006); Łukasz Kamiński, Grzegorz Waligóra, eds., *Kryptonim "Wasale": Służba Bezpieczeństwa wobec Studenckich Komitetów Solidarności 1977-1980* (Warszawa: IPN 2007); Łukasz Kamiński, Grzegorz Waligóra, eds., *Kryptonim "Gracze". Służba Bezpieczeństwa wobec Komitetu Obrony Robotników i Komitetu Samoobrony Społecznej "KOR" 1977-1981* (Warszawa: IPN, 2010).

When the CSCE Final Act was signed, many in the émigré community feared lest it could be interpreted as recognising the Soviet domination in Europe – which was precisely how the Polish government presented it. Individuals, including the president of the government in exile, Edward Raczyński, as well as organisations lobbied western governments to refrain from treating the CSCE as de facto confirmation of the post-1945 regime changes in Europe.[10] The émigré organisations also engaged in activities to provide support for the opposition groups in Poland. In March 1978 the London Polish community affiliated with the government in exile created the Fund for the Defence of Freedom of Expression and Human Rights in Poland (*Fundusz Obrony Wolności Słowa i Praw Ludzkich w Polsce*), which gave financial assistance to organisations in Poland. Such connections between Poland and the émigré community were of great interest to Poland's Ministry of Internal Affairs, which understood the implications of this support.[11] The Polish émigré community – enlarged after 1981 by an influx of political refugees following the imposition of martial law – remained active throughout the 1980s.

The Catholic church in Poland, too, played an important role. With the government refusing to recognise a political opposition, the church protested in an official way, i. e., by sending memoranda to the government, against issues such as the deteriorating standard of working and living, educational policy or state policies concerning families.[12] Its role was strengthened by the election of Cardinal Karol Wojtyła to the papacy in October 1978, and especially in the period after he made his first pilgrimage to his native land in 1979.

In January 1978 the Society for Scientific Courses (*Towarzystwo Kursów Naukowych*) was created, continuing the nineteenth-century tradition of independent teaching under foreign partitions. Since the group met in alternating private homes and its lecturers included university professors, it was called the 'flying university'.[13] Programmes broadcast by Radio Free

[10] Wanda Jarząbek, *Polska wobec Konferencji Bezpieczeństwa i Współpracy w Europie. Plany i rzeczywistość 1964-1975*, (Warszawa: ISP PAN, 2008): eadem, *Polska Rzeczpospolita Ludowa wobec polityki wschodniej Republiki Federalnej Niemiec w latach 1966-1976: Wymiar dwustronny i międzynarodowy* (Warszawa: ISP PAN, 2011), 441-442.

[11] See, among others, 'Informacja na temat kanałów łączności KSS "KOR" z ośrodkami zagranicznymi, opracowana przez inspektora Wydziału IX Departamentu III MSW kpt. E. Kudybińskiego', 28 Feb. 1979, in *Kryptonim "Gracze",* 502-508.

[12] Antoni Dudek, *Państwo i Kościół w Polsce* (Kraków: Arcana, 1995); Peter Raina, *Kościół katolicki a państwo w świetle dokumentów 1945-1989* (Poznań: W drodze, 1995), vols. II and III.

[13] Łukasz Kamiński, Grzegorz Waligóra, eds., *Kryptonim "Pegaz": Służba Bezpieczeństwa wobec Towarzystwa Kursów Naukowych* (Warszawa: IPN, 2008).

Europe, the domestic and émigré publishers and the various forms of alternative education combined to break the state's monopoly over the public sphere. Now, discussions of issues disallowed by the communist authorities could take place underground.[14] The opposition's reach was quite significant, albeit restricted mostly to the urban intelligentsia and to some worker communities.

The government attempted to destroy these independent movements and to confiscate their publications: Participants in the 1976 protests were punished and in May 1977 leading members of the Workers Defence Committee were arrested. In the summer of 1977, however, an amnesty was implemented and the Polish regime refrained from radical measures such as mass arrests, political trials or forced exile.[15] What were the reasons? Apparently, some groups in the security structures believed that the opposition groups were not numerous and that they could be kept in check with so-called 'operational methods' such as surveillance and subversion.[16] Others, including members of the Foreign Ministry, appear to have shared that perspective, and it is difficult to tell now whether they were swayed by the Ministry of Internal Affairs or whether their ideas came from elsewhere. This thinking appears for instance in documents of the Foreign Ministry about implementing the Final Act. It seems that some optimism was even prevalent in the top tiers of the communist regime.

To be sure, there were some proponents of harsher measures, but there was agreement that the opposition should be fought without creating publicity and visibility. Available Central Committee and Politburo documents permit only an incomplete reconstruction of the process by which the Polish leadership arrived at this tactic: The documents revealing the inner workings of the Politburo do not provide conclusive evidence and former Politburo members relate that this policy was discussed mainly behind the scenes. I believe that the international factor played an important role in these calculations especially from 1977. Key among these considerations

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[14] Justyna Błażejewska, *Papierowa rewolucja: Z dziejów drugiego obiegu wydawniczego w Polsce 1976-1989/1990* (Warszawa: IPN, 2009); Paweł Sowiński, *Zakazana książka: Uczestnicy drugiego obiegu 1977–1989,* (Warszawa: ISP PAN, 2011); Paweł Machcewicz, "*Monachijska menażeria": Walka z Radiem Wolna Europa* (Warszawa: ISP PAN, IPN, 2007); Sig Mickelson, *America's Other Voice: The Story of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty* (New York: Greenwood Publ., 1983).

[15] 'Notatka z narady odbytej u sekretarza KC PZPR Stanisława Kani, 22 Oct. 1976', in Andrzej Friszke, ed., *Rozmowy na Zawracie: Taktyka walki z opozycją demokratyczną październik 1976 – grudzień 1979* (Warszawa: ISP PAN, 2008), 54-55.

[16] Promoting this view in September 1976 was the director of Department III of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Gen. Adam Krzysztoporski, as quoted in *Rozmowy na Zawracie*, 12.

was the role of human rights in international politics, which was growing thanks to the CSCE process, and the connection between the east's honouring of human rights and the west's (foremost the United States') readiness to assist Poland's with some of its economic needs.[17]

Already during the Multilateral Preparatory Talks for the CSCE in Helsinki in 1972-73, both in the multilateral plenary meetings and during bilateral talks with western politicians and diplomats, human rights had appeared as one of the key issues on the CSCE agenda, indeed, one without which the conference could not begin. Even though initially neither Warsaw nor Moscow treated these harbingers seriously,[18] diplomatic and Ministry of Internal Affairs documents nonetheless show that the Polish leadership noticed the growing importance of human rights already during the initial conference. But the relevant documents underlined not only potential threats but also benefits for Poland and the other east bloc countries, such as opportunities for using some of the agreement's provisions in propaganda.[19] Warsaw also believed that the Declaration of Principles would become the most important part of the Final Act. The Declaration's recognition of the sovereign equality of the states (principle I) and of non-intervention in the internal affairs of states (principle VI) was therefore expected to reduce the importance of the provisions in the chapter on 'Co-operation in Humanitarian and Other Fields' (Basket III).[20] The latter covered access to printed, filmed and broadcast information, working conditions for journalists, the freedom of opinion, including political opinions, and protection of civil liberties, including religious freedoms.

While the western, especially west European, countries focussed mostly on the conditions for cultural and educational cooperation as well as the founding of cultural institutes and multilateral research projects, People's Poland was only interested in some aspects of this cooperation: The authorities favoured scientific co-operation giving Poland access to new technologies but did not want to cooperate on developing the humanities, unless

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[17] Wanda Jarząbek, Od Helsinek do Belgradu – władze PRL a problematyka trzeciego koszyka KBWE w latach 1975-1978, in *W dekadzie Gierka*, *Wrocławskie Studia z Polityki Zagranicznej*, vol. III (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek 2010), 124-125; eadem, *Hope and Reality: Poland and the Conference on Security and Coperation in Europe, 1964-1989,* Cold War International History Project Working Paper No. 56, Washington 2008, available at www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/WP56_Web.pdf (last visited 15 July 2013).

[18] Jarząbek, *Polska wobec Konferencji,* 93.

[19] Kierunki działania PRL w związku z realizacja uchwał Konferencji Bezpieczeństwa w Europie, 1 Dec. 1975, Departament Studiów i Programowania (henceforth: DSiP), z. 5/82, w. 2, Archiwum Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych (henceforth: AMSZ).

[20] Jarząbek, *Polska wobec Konferencji*, 155-156.

they could be closely monitored. They also did not want too much information about other countries, their standards of living, their media and societies, to reach the Polish public. The Polish government therefore attempted to prevent western states from opening cultural institutes and had no intention of abandoning the system of issuing permits to accredit journalists. Another set of issues Poland and the other members of the bloc found difficult to accept concerned movement: easing travel and, most prominently, emigration. Warsaw wanted emigration to remain a domestic issue and to be handled bilaterally. In the 1970s emigration was especially germane in its relations with the FRG and the United States.[21]

Poland, much like its fellow bloc members, all along treated the inclusion of human rights in the CSCE process as a necessary evil - something they had to do because of the west's insistence. Meetings on the various levels of the bloc (the Warsaw Pact's Committee of Ministers of Foreign Affairs and the Political Consultative Committee), conferences of various departments of the bloc's ruling communist parties, meetings of representatives of the Foreign Ministries and Ministries of Internal Affairs and discussions among general secretaries of the bloc all debated this question. Human rights were thus not an issue to be decided independently by Poland, but rather a bloc-wide one on which to confer and agree jointly, even though the extent of these conferences and agreements fluctuated and left room for manoeuvre for each bloc country.[22]

There were some similarities in the Soviet bloc members' strategies, most importantly introducing diplomatic initiatives that could distract the western CSCE members from violations of the Final Act's human rights provisions. Already at the Seventh Congress of the Polish United Workers' Party on 8-12 December 1975, a mere four months after the Final Act had been signed, Leonid Brezhnev spoke of the imperative of convening three conferences to discuss important issues, namely, the protection of the environment, the development of transport and energy policies, and the implementation of CSCE resolutions on bilateral and multilateral economic and technical cooperation. The bloc countries considered that resolutions on disarmament would interest the west; at the review conference of the CSCE in Belgrade (October 1977–March 1978), the Soviets thus presented a proposal for what they called a pan-European platform on military

[21] Jarząbek, *Polska Rzeczpospolita Ludowa,* 327-328, 449-450; Dariusz Stola, *Kraj bez wyjścia? Migracje z Polski 1949-1989* (Warszawa: ISP PAN, IPN, 2010).

[22] Csaba Békés, 'Der Warschauer Pakt und der KSZE-Prozess 1965 bis 1970', in Torsten Diedrich, et al., eds., *Der Warschauer Pakt: Von der Gründung bis zum Zusammenbruch 1955-1991* (Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 2009), 225-244, at 225-226; Jarząbek, *Polska wobec Konferencji*, 43-44.

détente.[23] Even as Moscow engaged in intensive military build-up, the countries of the bloc lay significant emphasis on military détente.

The individual countries also deliberated on ways to distract the first review meeting from the parts of Basket III that would be especially problematic to them. Poland developed a plan named after Edward Gierek for public peace education. Though the Belgrade conference did not adopt this initiative, it was partly implemented in different form by a UN declaration in December 1978. The plan was to propose at the Madrid conference that a meeting devoted to education for peace be held in Warsaw, with UNESCO participation as well.

Warsaw thus participated in Soviet bloc efforts to shift debates within the CSCE away from human rights issues and focus on questions of détente, disarmament or east-west technological and economic cooperation. At the same time, the Polish leadership, heavily dependent on western credits to modernize its economies, had understood already in the early 1970s that it benefitted from presenting itself as a relatively liberal country and from cultivating an image of Gierek as an open leader. Owing especially to Warsaw's close observation of developments in the United States, this political line was continued after the Helsinki conference. Despite some resistance from the Ford Administration, especially Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, in June 1976 the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, usually called the US Helsinki Commission was formed. The Commission consisted of nine members from the Senate, nine members from the House of Representatives and one member each from the Departments of State, Defense and Commerce. It put out reports about human rights violations, including – at times, mostly – eastern Europe, and organised hearings about conditions in individual countries; thus, a May 1977 hearing on Poland focussed on repressions of people involved in the June 1976 protests.[24] In addition to the Commission's work, some steps of the US administration also seem to have been taken to show disapproval of Polish government policy, for example, Kissinger's cancelling his meeting with Polish Foreign Minister Stefan Olszowski during the 1976 autumn session of the UN General Assembly (at least American media suggested such an explanation). Focussing on developments in the United States, Warsaw noted that Jimmy Carter was making the protection of human

[23] See, among others, 'Notatka: Narada ministrów spraw zagranicznych krajów wspólnoty socjalistycznej w Moskwie', 24 Dec. 1975, in Wanda Jarząbek, *PRL w politycznych strukturach Układu Warszawskiego 1955-1980,* (Warszawa: ISP PAN, 2008), 348-349; 'Notatka informacyjna z pierwszego posiedzenia Komitetu Ministrów Spraw Zagranicznych państw – stron UW w Moskwie', 27 May 1977, ibid., 368-373.

[24] Jarząbek, *Od Helsinek do Belgradu*, 125.

rights a key component of his identity as a presidential candidate, later as president, something that became especially visible during the Belgrade review conference.[25]

The importance of human rights also increased in Warsaw's relations with other countries. From 1975 to the Belgrade conference, western governments repeatedly lodged complaints against the treatment of their citizens, making reference to the CSCE Final Act. These often involved reuniting families (which in the case of the FRG was regulated by bilateral agreements) and mixed marriages. Most active in this area were US, Dutch and Swedish diplomats.[26] In the case of Sweden, many of the challenges consisted of demanding that Polish border officials not exclude former Polish citizens of Jewish origin, who had left Poland after the events of 1968, from the group entitled to travel between the two countries without a visa.

The American and West European press also began to pay considerable attention to human rights violations in Poland, especially after June 1976, a fact that was duly noted in Warsaw. Western social activists, especially the emergent transnational network of Helsinki monitoring groups, played an important role in calling for close oversight of human rights observance.[27]

During the preparations for the Belgrade conference, the Polish authorities granted an amnesty to people who had been arrested for taking part in the June 1976 protests. In 1977, the Polish Council of State (*Rada Państwa*) – nominally the country's highest political institution – ratified the UN's two human rights pacts of 1966: the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Interestingly, the Polish government tried to exploit the ratifications as an example of its own liberalism. However, the pacts were signed out of utilitarian motives: Legal analyses of the covenants had shown that they featured not only civic rights, but also duties of

[25] Breck Walker, 'Neither Shy or Demagogic: The Carter Administration Goes to Belgrade', in Vladimir Bilandžić and Milan Kosanović, eds., *From Helsinki to Belgrade: The First CSCE Follow-up Meeting in Belgrade 1977/78*, (Bonn: Bonn University Press, 2008), 185-204.

[26] Szyfrogram z Waszyngtonu w sprawie interwencji amerykańskiej dotyczącej rodzin podzielonych, 6 Apr. 1978, ZD 29/80, w. 20, t. 155, AMSZ; Notatka informacyjna o wizycie w Polsce premiera Szwecji T. Fälldina (12–15 kwietnia 1978 r.), Komitet Centralny Polskiej Zjednoczonej Partii Robotniczej (henceforth: KC PZPR), V/148, Archiwum Akt Nowych (henceforth: AAN).

[27] Sarah Snyder, 'Follow-up at Belgrade: How Human Rights Activists Shaped the Helsinki Process', in *From Helsinki to Belgrade,* 189-190.

the citizens and that they defined exceptional situations in which certain rights could be suspended.[28]

The first review conference in Belgrade was an important lesson for Warsaw. Its debates largely confirmed that Warsaw had chosen the correct strategy – no show trials, an amnesty for people arrested for being directly or indirectly involved (for example, by giving assistance) in the June 1976 protests, a somewhat more liberal treatment of foreign correspondents and access to foreign press, a more liberal policy for travel outside Poland (which included agreements with Austria, Finland and Sweden about travel without visas) meant that during the discussions about violations of the Helsinki Agreement's human rights provisions Poland was rarely mentioned. Poland's policies were diametrically opposed to Czechoslovakia's (Charter 77) and the USSR's (the Moscow Helsinki Group), which staged trials of opposition activists and forcibly exiled individuals inconvenient to the government; they also had problems with emigration, including the Jews, and church activity was seriously curtailed.[29]

Warsaw's relations with Washington also confirmed the advantages of this strategy. When Poland had difficulty obtaining new credit, the United States offered economic assistance. The Commodity Credit Corporation and the Export-Import Bank extended sizeable credits to Poland in 1977 and 1979.[30] Talks about additional credits continued even after strikes began in the summer of 1980: up to the imposition of martial law in December 1981, a total of $788.6 million was granted for agricultural and food products. Washington was also considering a stability loan, which was promoted by Ronald Reagan's Secretary of State Alexander Haig as supporting the democratisation process and helping to loosen the Soviet grip on Central Europe.[31] The imposition of martial law rendered this plan moot.
By the late 1970s, then, Poland was heavily dependent on external sources of finance, which, the government in Warsaw knew, the other countries of the bloc were unable to provide. The opposition, on the other hand, was not strong enough to threaten the foundations of power, as long as the economy did not suffer a major collapse and protests did not become widespread. Apparently with this in mind, the Polish leadership decided that it

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[28] Jarząbek, *PRL wobec Konferencji,*156.

[29] Jarząbek, *Od Helsinek do Belgradu*, 130.

[30] Andrzej Mania, *Détente i polityka Stanów Zjednoczonych wobec Europy Wschodniej: Styczeń 1969-styczeń 1981,* (Kraków: Wydawn. Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2003*),* 178.

[31] Alexander Haig, 'Memorandum for Ronald Reagan: U.S. Assistance Program for Poland', 1 Dec. 1981, in: Andrzej Paczkowski and Malcolm Byrne, eds., *From Solidarity to Martial Law: The Polish Crisis of 1980-1981. A Documentary History* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2007), 409.

could afford less radical steps than the other bloc countries in order to sustain its positive international image as a comparatively liberal state. It is noteworthy that in the late 1970s Moscow was not pleased with Warsaw's decisions. Warsaw, facing a difficult economic situation and unable to count on help from its neighbours, nonetheless defended its choices. In a meeting with Gierek in April 1978, Leonid Brezhnev spoke directly of Poland's inappropriate policies vis-à-vis the opposition and the Catholic church. Gierek admitted that opposition activity had intensified, but expressed optimism about his ability to manage the situation.[32] It is difficult to gauge whether the Polish government failed to recognise the scale of its problem, for it appears that it saw no alternative to tolerating the opposition. While the other countries of the bloc did not directly criticise the Polish government in the 1970s, they began to do so after the August 1980 strikes and the creation of the Solidarity trade union. They saw a lack of ideological vigilance and economic mistakes, including excessive indebtedness to the west, as the roots of the Polish situation.[33]

Moscow consistently demanded that Warsaw take more radical steps. It increased its pressure after the legalisation and growth of Solidarity and the creation of an independent student movement and farmers' unions.[34] Immediately after the government signed its agreement with Solidarity, on 3 September 1980, the Soviet Politburo adopted a resolution expressing Moscow's position on the crisis to present to the Polish leadership. It described the agreements between the Polish leadership and the workers as 'legalising the anti-socialist opposition', and suggested that to the system's

[32] Informacja o rozmowie I Sekretarza KC PZPR Edwarda Gierka z Sekretarzem Generalnym KC KPZR, Przewodniczącym Prezydium Rady Najwyższej ZSRR Leonidem Breżniewem, KC PZPR, XIA/523, AAN; Record of Comrade Leonid Brezhnev's statements (during this visit), KC PZPR, XIB/131, AAN. The ideological carelessness in the PRP was discussed by people including Konstantin Rusakov in a conversation with Ryszard Frelek, Note from conversation, dated 11 Dec. 1978, KC PZPR XIA/127, AAN. Kostikow wrote that the Polish government did not understand the dimensions of the problem, not even in the summer of 1980. Gierek was warned not to make light of the protests in Poland during the meeting in the Crimea. Cf. Piotr Kostikow, Bohdan Roliński, *Widziane z Kremla: Moskwa – Warszawa. Gra o Polskę* (Warszawa: BWG, 1992), 242. It is difficult to tell whether things were really like this.

[33] Erich Mielke's letter to the heads of organisational units of the State Security Ministry of the GDR about the situation in Poland, 12 Aug. 1980, in Łukasz Kamiński, ed., *Przed i po 13 grudnia: Państwa bloku wschodniego wobec kryzysu w PRL 1980-1982,* vol. I (Warszawa: IPN, 2006), 3-4; 'Informacja o aktualnej sytuacji w PRL opracowana dla KC KPCz i kierownictwa Federalnego MSW, 21 Aug. 1980', in *ibid.*, 10-16.

[34] Andrzej Paczkowski, *Droga do "mniejszego zła": Strategia i taktyka obozu władzy lipiec 1980 – styczeń 1982* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Lit., 2002), 35.

opponents, it would not be enough.[35] It called on the party leadership to fight the opposition and to purge and mobilise the Communist party.

While it appears that until 1980 the growing international importance of human rights in the context of the CSCE had played a major role in Poland's policy vis-à-vis the opposition, from the autumn of 1980 the domestic situation took precedence as the Polish government turned its attention to avoiding street confrontations and weighing its options for combatting Solidarity. As the domestic situation threatened to get out of hand, the external factor ceased to be decisive; martial law was introduced in disregard of possible western reactions to defend the clearly besieged communist government and under pressure from the Kremlin. Still, after the experiences of the second half of the 1970s the government must have been aware that a clampdown would spoil its relations with the west and, at least in the short term, worsen the conditions of its economic cooperation with the west. But Warsaw also hoped that at least some of the western countries would appreciate that ending the Polish crisis would bring stability to this part of Europe.

Polish Government and Opposition Views on the CSCE Review Conference in Madrid

The issue of human rights had dominated the follow-up conference in Belgrade to the point that the participating states failed to agree on a concluding document. Thus, the Warsaw Pact countries were concerned that the west could try to amend the Final Act during the next review conference – to be held in Madrid in 1980 – by making human rights even more prominent. The Soviet bloc countries therefore intensified their diplomatic efforts in preparation for the conference in Madrid. The east also wondered whether the western countries would speak in one voice or whether it might be possible to exploit differences among them.

In April 1979, the first deputy Soviet foreign minister accepted Poland's invitation to come to Warsaw for consultations on international issues, in preparation for the meeting of the Committee of Foreign Ministers being planned for May.[36] As with the Belgrade meeting, Moscow did not want the Madrid conference to be as important as the Helsinki meeting. The

[35] Tezy do rozmów z przedstawicielami kierownictwa polskiego, 3 Sep. 1980, in Andrzej Krawczyk, et al., eds., *Teczka Susłowa: Dokumenty* (Warszawa: Polska Agencja Informacyjna, 1993), 16-27.

[36] Pilna notatka z konsultacji I z-cą ministra SZ ZSRR W. Malcewem /26-27.04/, E. Wojtaszek, 2 May 1979, Dep. IV, z. 4/84, w. 8, AMSZ.

meetings in the Spanish capital were supposed to review adherence to the provisions of the Final Act, not to make new decisions. Moreover, meetings were to be held on the lower diplomatic level of the national delegations with the foreign ministers joining them only towards the end of the conference.

When the Committee of the Foreign Ministries of the Warsaw Pact countries convened in Budapest on 14-15 May 1979 the preparations for Madrid were one of the dominant themes (disarmament being the second major issue).[37] The Soviet bloc countries discussed ways of avoiding what they called the 'negative aspects of the meeting' in Belgrade, i.e., focussing on Basket III.[38] With this goal in mind, east bloc diplomats were to continue their individual efforts to influence the western states in bilateral meetings, so as to obstruct or stop western efforts to create a common policy on human rights and on the exchange of information between east and west (this chiefly meant facilitating the work of journalists). But the countries of the east bloc could not agree: Romania, for one, had its own vision, believing that a new CSCE summit should be convened to revise the Final Act by creating a permanent agency of the CSCE. But Romania did see eye to eye with the rest of the bloc on Basket III. A communiqué from the Committee of Foreign Ministers proposed a political gathering of the 35 CSCE countries to discuss military détente. After the Committee's next meeting in East Berlin on 5-6 December 1979, a communiqué outlined the concept of a European conference on military détente in Europe, affiliated with the CSCE, whose tasks would include confidence-building measures, reducing military confrontation and arms reduction.

The east bloc countries held talks on this issue with France, which was developing its own idea for a similar meeting. Warsaw was involved in it, partly because of its earlier experience in disarmament talks and its good relations with France. The goal of the east bloc countries was for the Madrid conference to resolve to hold such a conference on military détente. With these steps, the Soviet bloc governments were trying to come up with ideas and topics that would reduce the importance of human rights. At a time when east-west relations were deteriorating, arms reduction and maintaining peace were the key issues in international relations, and the east wanted them, and not human rights, to be the primary topic of discussion.

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[37] Notatka informacyjna o posiedzeniu Komitetu Ministrów Spraw Zagranicznych państw stron Układu Warszawskiego, 16 May 1979, in Jarząbek, *PRL w politycznych strukturach*, 404-410.

[38] Notatka informacyjna o posiedzeniu Komitetu Ministrów Spraw Zagranicznych państw stron Układu Warszawskiego, in Jarząbek, *PRL w politycznych strukturach,* 408.

Warsaw was also apprehensive about the upcoming meeting, primarily because of public criticism and the publicity about the opposition movements that had appeared in Poland. It was also hoping that the issues of Basket II, easing trade relations, would be discussed more.

Another problem facing the Polish government was the opposition's desire to use the Madrid conference to expose human rights violations in Poland. Until the late 1970s, the Helsinki Final Act had not been a major point of reference for the Polish opposition. Criticism of the domestic situation and the discussion about human rights violations arose from domestic experiences and traditions. In the wake of the Belgrade conference, however, the opposition became aware of the potential power of raising international awareness of the human rights situation in Poland. In 1980, a Polish Helsinki Commission began to function formally, largely in preparation for the Madrid conference.

The main goal of this Commission was to compile a report on the observance – or rather violation – of human rights. Its 'Madrid report about the compliance with human and civil rights in Poland' was completed in October 1980 and published as Document 1 of the Helsinki Commission.[39] Bringing together and annotating the materials were commission members Ludwik Cohn, Edward Lipiński, Zbigniew Romaszewski and Aniela Steinsbergowa. Assisting them were associates of the Intervention Bureau of the Committee of Social Self-Defence of the Workers' Defence Committee (*Biuro Interwencyjne Komitetu Samoobrony Społecznej 'KOR'*), which had been created in order to record instances of government abuses and to counter them. Among the latter were Jerzy Geresz, Aleksander Horodyński, Krystyna Iwaszkiewicz, Jarosław Kaczyński, Jan Kelus, Anka Kowalska, Jacek Kuroń, Jan Józef Lipski, Jan Lityński, Zofia Romaszewska and Jan Walc. The attorneys Andrzej Grabiński, Witold Lis-Olszewski, Jan Olszewski, Władysław Siła-Nowicki, Stanisław Szczuka and Jacek Taylor lent a hand.

The Madrid report discussed social and political conditions in Poland, including the observance of fundamental human rights as prescribed by – significantly – the 1966 UN covenants and not CSCE documents; the legal system; abuses by the police and judiciary, which included the unexplained murder of Jagiellonian University student Stanisław Pyjas in May 1977; beatings of detainees in police stations; the goings-on in courts and misdemeanour courts; the situation in prisons; and repressions of opposition activists for which the report provided an overview and individual case studies.

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[39] Komisja Helsińska, *Raport madrycki o przestrzeganiu praw człowieka i obywatela w Polsce* (Warszawa: Wyd. im. Konstytucji 3 maja, 1980).

Though Helsinki Commission member Zbigniew Romaszewski, who was to carry the document to Madrid, did not receive a passport,[40] the report was published and distributed in Madrid in November nonetheless.[41] It was also sent to other international organisations as the Polish security apparatus duly noted.

From its opening day, the mood of the Madrid conference was dominated by renewed east-west tensions. East bloc documents from the time ascribe the tensions to 'NATO's drive to gain military dominance'. According to the west, they stemmed from 'the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, the USSR's increasing speed of armaments (SS-20) and violations of human rights in the socialist countries'.[42] Because the conference began already after the Solidarity trade union had been legalised, the Polish delegation was able to sustain its image as one of the more liberal countries of the bloc, which did not mean, however, that it wanted to distance itself from its allies. As before, Poland hoped that discussions of Basket III would stay away from political freedoms. In background documents, Basket III issues were labelled 'cultural-educational' and 'humanitarian'. Warsaw went on to declare its preparedness to cooperate on implementing concepts of Basket III in this context. After its initial assessment of the western proposals, it deemed worthy of support France's idea of creating a 'Scientific forum' and a French-Italian-Luxemburg plan to cooperate on historical preservation and artistic heritage.[43] Poland also considered offering its support to a Nordic scheme to train young scholars – although it did not back the idea of creating an international organisation charged with it.

However, Warsaw was opposed to a plan from Austria, Spain and Switzerland on access to information and the treatment of foreign correspondents, which would have committed the CSCE signatories not to expel foreign journalists. The Polish government also seriously objected to a joint scheme by the European Community and the US submitted on 10 December 1980 regarding information, subscriptions to foreign publications, the treatment of correspondents and a reduction of the jamming of radio programmes. It is noteworthy that the reason why Poland did not espouse

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[40] Robert Zuzowski, *Political Dissent and Opposition in Poland: The Workers' Defense Committee "KOR"* (Westport, London: Praeger, 1992), 17-53.

[41] It was translated and published in the United States as *Prologue to Gdansk: Report on the Observation of the Human and Civil Rights in the Polish People's Republic,* New York 1980.

[42] Notatka informacyjna, Problematyka zasad KBWE na Spotkaniu Madryckim /11.09.-19.12.1980/, J. M. Nowak, (opr. A. D. Rotfeld), 6 Dec. 1981, Dep. IV, z. 44/86, w. 5, AMSZ.

[43] Letter, R. Korczewski to Wł. Konarski, deputy director of the Research and Planning Department of the Foreign Ministry, 14 Jan. 1981, Dep. IV, z. 45/84, w. 11, AMSZ.

some of these plans was economic: Polish background documents explained that an increase of import duty on foreign publications was tied to Poland's shortage of foreign currency reserves. It was for ideological reasons, however, that Poland refused to adopt the principle that journalists should not 'be punished' – for instance by deporting them – and that they were not responsible for the contents of the information they relayed. Warsaw also approached the issue of the free flow of information traditionally. A document of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs recommended that: 'The issue of jamming foreign radio programmes must be tied to the policy of exploiting [as in the case of Radio Free Europe] radio programmes for the goals of anti-communist propaganda'.[44]

Warsaw also did not favour some of the provisions facilitating human contacts. Poland made it difficult for people to cross its borders in both directions. Yet so did some western countries, which were protecting themselves from the frequent attempts by east bloc citizens to overstay their visas, and so they, too, did not favour all such reforms. The western countries required that to travel in the west, an east bloc citizen must carry a given amount of their currency, which was difficult for many from the east to afford. Thus, from the perspective of the east (at times their official positions reflected reality), western countries were de facto limiting the right to emigrate, or the right to free movement for some categories of people. Poland intended to exploit this fact. For instance, it wanted to bring up the case of Britain's treatment of Polish citizens, who would be interrogated in consulates and later, as they crossed the border, also asked about issues that did not appear on visa forms. Poles were also required to provide statements from their employers that they had been given leave and that their jobs would await their return, and they had to have a return ticket.

The countries of the east bloc, including Poland, wanted the Final Act to be viewed, as they defined it, integrally, and also primarily as a document that expressed political will and not as an international treaty, which, in fact, it was not (albeit principle VII did refer to international law).[45] According to the reports of the Polish delegation to the CSCE in Madrid, the Soviet bloc diplomats tried to establish a connection between the process of détente and 'progress in the area of respecting human rights, broadening freedoms, increased contacts' during the conference talks.[46]

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[44] Ibid.

[45] Problematyka zasad KBWE na Spotkaniu Madryckim, Dep. IV, z. 44/86, w. 5, AMSZ.

[46] Ibid.

All along, the western countries, including the United States, did not hide their priorities.[47] Détente was over, at least in relations with the Soviet Union, and this also influenced relations with Moscow's satellites. The USSR became the main target of criticism because of its violations of religious rights (much attention was paid to the situation of the Eastern Catholic churches, Roman Catholics in Lithuania and the Ukraine, or the discrimination of the Jews).[48] The western countries used the method of 'naming names', which the US delegation headed by Arthur J. Goldberg had pioneered in Belgrade, that is, they cited specific cases of human rights violations by identifying the victim by his or her name. The west also demanded freedom of emigration from the Soviet bloc.

Initially, Warsaw was in quite a good position in these debates. Poland was evaluated positively, as its delegation reported from the conference, for settling the August 1980 strikes peacefully, which included granting independent trade unions the right to register, easing the government's monopoly of information and broadening religious freedoms (by allowing radio broadcasts of Masses).[49] Poland was not always mentioned by name in situations that it was involved in, for example, clandestine troop movements, which mostly concerned the Red Army anyway. Warsaw largely restricted itself to responding to western charges and focused its criticism only on the West Germans. To quote a note: 'following the general principle of not worsening bilateral relations, we formulated critical opinions exclusively towards the FRG, but in a form that did not require the FRG delegation to respond'.[50] Overall, the Polish delegation played on the east bloc's team and had no intention of supporting proposals that could be used, for example, to broaden the right to information or journalistic activity.[51]

The Soviet bloc pushed for the implementation of its priorities, including the Conference on Military Disarmament and Military Détente. But the

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[47] On human rights, see, e.g., Thomas, *Helsinki Effect*. On US policy: William Korey, *The Promises We Keep: Human Rights, the Helsinki Process, and American Foreign Policy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993); Snyder, *Human Rights Activism*. On relations between the superpowers regarding human rights, e.g., Douglas Selvage, 'The Superpowers and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, 1977-1983: Human Rights, Nuclear Weapons, and Western Europe', in Matthias Peter and Herrmann Wentker, eds., *Die KSZE im Ost-West-Konflikt: Internationale Politik und gesellschaftliche Transformation 1975-1990,* (München: Oldenbourg Verlag 2012), 15-58.

[48] Problematyka zasad KBWE na Spotkaniu Madryckim, Dep. IV, z. 44/86, w. 5, AMSZ.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Ibid.

[51] Note for W. Konarski, 14 Jan. 1981, Dep. IV, z. 45/84, w. 11, AMSZ.

west was playing as a team, too, and more or less officially made this conference contingent on the fulfilment of seven human-rights conditions.[52] These included convening a conference on human rights, putting on a meeting about family reunification, the sanctioning of social groups monitoring the implementation of the Final Act, facilitating the work of foreign correspondents, ending radio jamming, granting freedom of religious practice and agreeing within the CSCE on its next meeting. Even before Poland introduced martial law on 13 December 1981, there was no agreement between the two sides, and afterwards tensions grew even more.

After the imposition of martial law, Warsaw found itself at the centre of western criticism. The first international reactions were restrained, but once France and the United States issued the first declarations on 16 December, other governments followed. On 18 December all the delegations that gave speeches in Madrid described the situation in Poland as a massive violation of the principles of the Final Act. The United States was the most severe, the Vatican moderate and Austria issued an appeal for economic assistance for Poland and acceptance of refugees.[53] Warsaw's delegation followed instructions and asserted that martial law was a domestic matter, but it did anticipate that the session scheduled to resume in February 1982 would bring new questions and challenges.

Yet when the conference reconvened in February 1982, criticism was not as sharp anymore as had been expected. In Warsaw, it was believed that this was driven by the United States, which did not want the Polish question to dominate the conference; at least in part, this assessment seems to have been correct. Polish diplomatic documents indicate that the Vatican, too, attempted to temper the general mood.[54] Many western delegates continued to bring up the imperative of reactivating Solidarity and argued that internees should be released, gradually and not all at once – but Warsaw paid no attention to such nuances.

Yet the western governments' moderate criticism did not mean that western publics did not react to the events in Poland. According to the Polish government, public opinion in the west had 'largely given in to a disinformation campaign'. The French and the Swedes were particularly active, influencing their governments' policies. Solidarity's Coordinating

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[52] Notatka informacyjna dot. konsultacji polsko-radzieckich nt. spotkania KBWE w Madrycie, J. Wiejacz, 7 Oct. 1981, Departament Instytucji Europejskich (henceforth: DIE), z. 32/93, w. 15, AMSZ.

[53] Notatka informacyjna, Wpływ wydarzeń w Polsce na spotkanie madryckie KBWE, S. Dąbrowa, 22 Dec. 1981, DIE, z. 32/93, w. 15, AMSZ.

[54] Notatka informacyjna, Wnioski dot. problematyki polskiej na spotkaniu madryckim KBWE, 26 Mar.1982, DIE, z. 32/93, w. 15, AMSZ.

Office Abroad – the official representation of the trade union in the west – informed western publics about developments in Poland.[55]

As Warsaw was hit by a wave of criticism, some western delegates to the CSCE, for example the Austrians, offered advice to Polish diplomats on how to deal with this situation. According to a member of the Polish delegation, 'It was pointed out to us that in case martial law is extended, we should assist the process of "getting the western public opinion used to" the current state of domestic relations in Poland…through articles placed in the western press and public statements in the west by Polish personalities considered trustworthy there'.[56]

Using the fact that it chaired the CSCE sessions in Madrid in early 1982, Warsaw attempted to obstruct discussions about the situation in Poland.[57] Together with the USSR and the other countries of the bloc, it refused to promote legalising Helsinki Committees and to grant the freedom to form trade unions in the Soviet bloc (Solidarity had been suppressed on 13 December 1981); it also did not agree to allow an experts' conference on human rights being planned for May-June 1985 in Ottawa to pass binding provisions. The issue of Poland led the United States to weigh suspending the conference, but decided that in the atmosphere of growing international tension, it would be best to retain this forum, where the different countries could meet and talk.[58]

For Warsaw, too, taking part in the works of international organisations and international conferences during martial law was very important. Poland had been isolated diplomatically in protest against martial law and its restrictions. Some, albeit not all, exchange visits were suspended (talks continued on signing the protocols of existing agreements and some more technical ones). Thus, during the meeting in Madrid, on 7 September 1983, for example, Polish Foreign Minister Stefan Olszowski was able to meet with the West German foreign minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher. Still, taking part in these meetings entailed hearing much criticism. What is more, demonstrations were staged in front of Polish diplomatic missions,

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[55] Gunter Dehnert, 'Entspannung gegen das Volk – Sanktionen für das Volk? Die Solidarność nach Ausrufung des Kriegesrechts und die Nachfolgekonferenz von Madrid', in *Die KSZE,* 249-250; Idesbald Goddeeris, 'Lobbying Allies? The NSZZ Solidarność Coordinating Office Abroad, 1982-1989', *Journal of Cold War Studies*, vol. 13, No. 3 (Summer 2011), 83-125.

[56] Wnioski dot. problematyki polskiej na spotkaniu madryckim KBWE, 26 Mar. 1982, DIE, z. 32/93, w. 15, AMSZ.

[57] Notatka informacyjna, V runda spotkania państw KBWE w Madrycie /9.02.-12.03.1982/. W. Konarski, 17.03.1982, DIE, z. 30/93, w. 6, AMSZ.

[58] Ibid.

international organisations and conference centres in which Polish delegates were present.

Conclusion

As new opposition organisations came into being, as the economic situation worsened and strikes were staged, human rights became an increasingly problematic aspect of international relations for the government of People's Poland in the 1970s. There were limits to its tolerance of the opposition groups: as long as the groups' activities did not threaten the authorities' position, the survival of the political regime and Soviet interests, the Polish authorities made life difficult for them, but did not attempt to crush them. The introduction of martial law doubtless became a turning point, maybe revealing the real face of the regime. The Madrid conference was undoubtedly a breakthrough regarding the place of human rights in world politics, to which, paradoxically, the situation in People's Poland contributed. Human rights violations in eastern Europe became an increasingly regular presence in the media. They were also used in western policies towards the Soviet bloc, although protests against human rights violations were largely a means to other political goals.

The period between the Helsinki and the Madrid conferences represented a learning process for both the government and the fledgling organised opposition in Poland. For the authorities, this meant realising that human rights were indeed important, for them, too, if they were to win concrete political gains in their dealings with the west. Still, the belief prevailed that in inter-governmental dealings, political and geopolitical concerns were more important. The opposition also became aware of the potential of internationalising their struggle for human rights. Thus, human rights were evolving into a problem for the communist governments, including the Polish one. They were prepared to make some concessions on them, but only when their domestic situation was not too turbulent. To the Polish government in 1981, its ties to the Soviet bloc, and to Moscow itself, were certainly pre-eminent. In this period, the retribution Poland suffered, however painful, did not mean that the Polish government would yield on human rights. The period of martial law saw their violations, and after martial law ended, the state of affairs did not return to what it had been before 1981.

In the long term, the defence of human rights contributed to the collapse of communism, but was not a force that could act in isolation. The end of communism was decided by a combination of other factors, foremost among them the communist states' economic incompetence and its consequences.

BENT BOEL

WESTERN EUROPEAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATS AND DISSIDENCE IN THE SOVIET BLOC DURING THE COLD WAR*

In 1972, Tony Benn, a prominent figure of the British Labour Party, referring to a group of exiled eastern European socialists, stated: 'although I deeply sympathise with their feelings and share many of their ideals I am not at all clear what their role is, and fear that it is likely to be destructive of the détente and *Ostpolitik* in which I believe'.[1] Ten years later he was echoed by the West German chancellor Helmut Schmidt who was 'appalled' that the declaration of martial law in Poland had been 'necessary'[2] while at the same time stating that his heart was with the Polish workers.[3] The issue of the relationship with eastern European dissidents during the cold war was never an easy one for western European socialists and social democrats[4] and it cannot be reduced to a conflict between heartfelt inclinations and coolheaded considerations. During much of the post-war period it confronted them with a dilemma: how to demonstrate their solidarity with the oppressed in the east while pushing for détente between the two

* A slightly different version of this article has been published in French in *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'histoire*, 109 (2011), 169-181.

[1] Tony Benn to Hans Janitschek (Secretary General of the SI), 5 May 1972, folder East European Study Group 1972-1974, Study Group on Eastern Europe Questions 1972-1976, Archives of the Socialist International, International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam (hereafter: SIA IISH).

[2] Nina Dombrowsky, 'Solidarität mit Solidarność? Politische Reaktionen aus der Bundesrepublik auf die Entstehung der "Solidarność" und die Ausrufung des Kriegszustandes in der Volksrepublik Polen 1980–1982', *Deutschland Archiv*, 41 (2008), 68-78, at 68.

[3] Ibid., 72.

[4] In the following the terms 'socialist' and 'social democrat' will be treated as synonymous.

blocs? A number of observers have highlighted Social democratic neglect,[5] some political adversaries even accusing them of having played the role of a pro-Soviet 'fifth column'.[6] Conversely, it has been argued – in the case of the West German Social Democratic Party (SPD) in particular – that it would be appropriate to talk about a dual strategy: the leadership focusing on the communist regimes while lower party levels took care of contacts with the dissidents.[7]

When the Socialist International (SI) reconstructed itself after the second world war, it did so on an overtly anti-communist platform. The declaration of the founding Congress (Frankfurt, 1951) denounced international communism as 'the instrument of a new imperialism' based on 'a militarist bureaucracy and a terrorist police' and the SI voiced its 'solidarity with all peoples suffering under dictatorship, whether Fascist or Communist, in their efforts to win freedom'.[8] Subsequently, the SI reacted to the recurrent crises in the east with condemnations of the repression which systematically ensued (GDR 1953, Hungary 1956, Czechoslovakia 1968).[9] Such judgments should not surprise anyone. After the war, western social democrats placed themselves unambiguously on the side of western democracies. They were shocked by the annihilation of their socialist brothers in the east; most of them opted for membership in the nascent Atlantic community; and they clearly sympathized with those who opposed the communist regimes.[10] But to what degree did this sympathy translate into concrete actions?

Several factors hampered social democratic endeavours to help oppositionists in the eastern countries. One such factor was a strong attachment to east-west dialogue. Among the justifications given for the *Ostpolitik* implemented by Chancellor Willy Brandt from 1969 onwards was the belief that

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[5] Timothy Garton Ash, *In Europe's Name: Germany and the Divided Continent* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 330-331; György Konrad (interview with), 'It Does Not Hurt to Apologise', in Hannes Swoboda and Jan Marinus Wiersma, eds., *Politics of the Past: The Use and Abuse of History* (Vienna: Renner Institute, 2009), 65-66.

[6] See for example: Bertel Haarder, ed., *Hvem holdt de med?* (Søborg: Peter la Cours Forlag, 1999).

[7] Gerhard Besier, 'Deutsche Sozialdemokratie und polnische Opposition (1966–1990): Ein Bericht aus den Quellen', in Mike Schmeitzner and Katarzyna Stokłosa, eds., *Partner oder Kontrahenten? Deutsch-polnische Nachbarschaft im Jahrhundert der Diktaturen* (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2008), 155-178, at 171.

[8] See www.socialistinternational.org/viewArticle.cfm?ArticleID=39&ArticlePageID=12&ModuleID=18 (last visited 12 June 2013).

[9] Vilém Bernard, 'The SI and Eastern Europe', 29 June 1972, folder 1967-1982 and 1972, Socialist Union of Central and Eastern Europe Archives, IISH (hereafter: SE IISH).

[10] Guillaume Devin, *L'Internationale socialiste: Histoire et sociologie du socialisme international, 1945–1990* (Paris: Presses de la FNSP, 1993), 31.

only a stabilization of the communist regimes would provide them with the sense of security needed if they were to liberalize internally and open up externally. This view of détente, which could be found in other social democracies as well, logically produced scepticism towards any potentially destabilizing factor in the east, destabilization being more likely to lead to repression and regression than to positive developments. Thus the memory of Soviet interventions in 1953, 1956 and 1968 heavily influenced the social democratic reading of the Polish crisis in 1980–81. Moreover, social democratic parties shared a 'realist' and statist approach to understanding international relations, which led them to focus on 'the powers that be' in the east, i.e., the communist regimes. Thirdly, an ideological factor cannot be ignored. While socialists and social democrats were generally impervious to communist ideology, the idea of a common affinity between the 'enemy brothers' within the 'labour movement', the existence of a common history, and – even if only very partially – their having shared rhetoric, ideological references and symbolism, all created an ambiguity which the eastern régimes were adept at exploiting.[11] From the early 1970s, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union encouraged a dialogue with western social democracies which sometimes took forms (e. g., invitations to congresses, official visits concluding with common communiqués praising the eastern regimes' accomplishments) which would have been inconceivable in a (rather hypothetical) relationship between social democrats and right-wing dictatorships. The belief that an ideological debate with Communists could serve a purpose, that Communists were susceptible to being influenced and to changing, was an important motive for those choosing to give priority to détente from above.[12]

Finally, one should note that on the mental map of the social democrats – as on that of most westerners of all political orientations – eastern Europe was very far away. The fundamental explanation for this was, of course, the iron curtain, which limited the free movement of people, goods, ideas and information between those countries and the west, and the predominant belief that the Wall was there to stay. Any thoughts about the dissidents were brushed aside by the idea that contacts with them were not possible (since these countries were totalitarian), would make no difference (the fate of the iron curtain depended on inter-state relations, not on inter-personal

[11] Bent Boel, 'Danmark og dissidenterne i Østeuropa', in John T. Lauridsen, et al., eds., *Leksikon om Danmark under Den Kolde Krig* (Copenhagen: Gads Forlag, 2011), 188-191.

[12] Egon Bahr, 'Die Deutschlandpolitik der SPD nach dem Kriege', in Dieter Dowe, ed., *Die Ost- und Deutschlandpolitik der SPD in der Opposition 1982-1989* (Bonn: Forschungsinstitut der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 1993), 11-40, at 27.

contacts) or might even be counterproductive (because they would likely provoke measures of repression against the dissidents and/or strengthen the 'hawks' in the east).[13]

Thus, it is not surprising that the parties of the SI could give the impression that eastern European dissidents only played a very minor – and somewhat ambiguous – role in their thinking about the Soviet bloc. However, there actually were contacts, foremost so with the exiled, but also with oppositionists in Czechoslovakia, Poland and the GDR.

Eastern European Exiles within the Socialist International

The first encounter between western social democrats and eastern oppositionists took place in the west. Indeed, following the establishment of communist regimes in the east, exiled Soviet bloc socialists and social democrats asked to be affiliated with the SI, which during that same time was struggling to reconstruct itself. Some western parties opposed this, and the solution agreed upon was to establish the Socialist Union of Central and Eastern Europe (SUCEE), the members of which (initially the Bulgarian, Czechoslovak, Hungarian, Polish and Yugoslav parties) were admitted as 'consultative members' and allowed to participate in congresses with the right to speak, but not to vote.

Subsequently the three Baltic parties were also admitted, but the French and the British successfully opposed the admission of the Ukrainian, Georgian, Armenian and Menshevik parties, fearing that such a step might send too belligerent a signal to the Soviet Union. From the outset, then, the 'diplomats' got the upper hand over the 'ideologues'[14] within the SI. In addition to the status of 'consultative member' given to most of its individual members, the SUCEE was accepted as an organization affiliated with the SI, including the right to send a delegation (comprised of two members) to the congresses of the SI. In the end, it does seem justified to conclude that eastern European socialists benefited from a western 'solidarity on the cheap'.[15]

The SUCEE survived until the end of the cold war. But it remained a feeble, poor organization, with a stable but inevitably also ageing leader-

[13] Boel, 'Danmark og dissidenterne'.

[14] Devin, *L'Internationale socialiste*, 197.

[15] *Ibid.*; Michel Dreyfus, *L'Europe des socialistes* (Brussels: Editions Complexe, 1991), 242. See also Vilém Bernard, 'Report on activities covering the period since the SUCEE conference in 1979 in Stockholm', note, sine dato, folder SUCEE 1967-1982 and 1982, Minutes of the SUCEE conference, 1-2 Nov. 1982, SE IISH.

ship, less and less in touch with the old countries.[16] Within the SI, the feeling spread that the exiles constituted an embarrassing burden, clearly out of touch with the policy of détente. In 1969 the president of the SI, the Austrian Bruno Pittermann, told SUCEE members that he was

> a member of a party which has once been suppressed and from my experience I tell you that the greatest danger for you are not your enemies but those Social Democrats working in legal parties who regard attempts to keep Social Democracy alive in communist countries as useless or even harmful. It is our duty not to write off the Social Democrats in those countries. We must not accept the existing situation ideologically.[17]

Pittermann's warning was justified. There were several attempts – in 1971 and again in 1976 – to suspend the individual affiliation of the eastern exiled parties, allowing only for an indirect affiliation through the SUCEE. The last attempt – a proposal put forward by the SPD's international secretary Hans-Eberhard Dingels – failed to reach a majority by only one vote.[18] Another structure, the Study Group on East European Questions (mainly comprised of eastern exiles),[19] ceased to convene after Willy Brandt became president of the SI in 1976, though it was reactivated in the middle of the 1980s.[20]

The parallel development of détente and of dissidence exacerbated the problem. While détente made the socialists more wary of the eastern affiliates, dissidence raised – and frustrated – expectations among the exiles. There were SI-statements condemning repression in the east, but not that many. Brandt did put the issue of human rights on the agenda, a committee was even established to discuss it, but the situation in the east was largely ignored by this committee. A major dual consequence of Brandt's relaunching of a feeble Socialist International was to turn its attention to the Third World and to avoid sensitive topics. Relations with the east certainly fit into that latter category.[21]

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[16] Minutes of the SUCEE conference, 1-2 Nov. 1982, folder SUCEE 1967-1982 and 1982, SE IISH.

[17] Minutes of the SUCEE conference, 14-15 June 1969, folder 1967-1982 and 20, SE IISH.

[18] Vilém Bernard to all members of the SI, 21 Sept. 1976, folder SUCEE 1967-1982, 1976, SE IISH.

[19] Bernard, 'The SI and Eastern Europe', 29 June 1972, folder 1967-1982 and 23, SE IISH.

[20] Note 'Meeting of Study Group on Central and Eastern Europe', 4 Dec. 1986, 60 RI (WB) 209, Fondation Jean Jaurès (hereafter: FJJ), Paris.

[21] For a conservative American assessment see Arnold M. Silver, 'The New Face of the Socialist International', report, The Heritage Foundation, October 1981.

The SUCEE repeatedly expressed its disapproval, notably by criticizing the relative warmth that came to the relations with the eastern regimes. The group's president, the Latvian social democratic leader Bruno Kalnins, denounced those within the SI who according to him had adopted a pro-Soviet stance and behaved as 'useful idiots' for the Communists.[22] The SUCEE deplored the lack of interest in the dissidents, be it verbal (e. g., restraint in the condemnation of repressive measures) or practical (in particular, the fact that dissidents coming into exile in the west were not more often received and taken care of by social democrats). Tactical arguments were put forward: the absence of a wholehearted support for the opposition in the east handicapped the future of democratic socialism in the east, giving ammunition to those who believed that only the far left and the right-winger cared about eastern Europe.[23] Such a reasoning was obviously only of interest for somebody who could perceive of democratization in the east as something which might actually happen one day.

The survival of the exiles within the SI testified to the fact that they were not completely isolated. They had allies in the form of parties which more than others raised their voices to defend the dissidents. The Italians were among the most persistent. In 1970, the former leader of the Italian Socialist Party (PSI), Pietro Nenni, told his European comrades:

> At our congresses and at the meetings of our General Council we are voting against oppression in Czechoslovakia. [...] We sign appeals and telegrams but we have not given support to the political and cultural activities of the Czechoslovak resistance and we still do not support it on an all-European level. [...] The source of the movements in the East which keep the flame of the critical spirit alive is a cultural factor of the highest importance. It is a humanist and liberty-loving revisionism which demands equal rights for all, and it is closely connected with the origins of the modern movement of socialism in Europe and all over the world. We have not supported this spirit and we still do not assist it, even though its head remains unbowed and lives on in the clandestine activities of minorities and exiled comrades.[24]

Two years later, during a seminar in Paris, another leading member of the party, Bettino Craxi, launched an appeal to support the clandestine struggle

[22] Bruno Kalnins at the SI's Congress, 27 June 1972, folder 1967-1982 and 1972, SE IISH.

[23] Minutes of the conference of the SUCEE, 19-20 May 1979, folder 1967-1982 and 1979, SE IISH.

[24] Bernard, 'The SI and Eastern Europe', 29 June 1972, folder 1967-1982 and 23, SE IISH.

of the opposition in Czechoslovakia.[25] And from 1976 onwards, when Craxi became the leader of the PSI, Italian socialists were consistently engaged in the support of the dissidents. At the same time, they criticized the Germans – just as did the French during the Polish crisis in 1980–1981. In 1977, the Italians blamed the Germans for being responsible for the SI's low profile when it came to supporting eastern European dissidents.[26] However, a new group of exiles, *Listy*, actually did benefit from broad social democratic sympathy.

Contacts with the Czechoslovak Opposition: From *Listy* to Havel

The outrage with which the western socialist left reacted to the crushing of the Prague Spring reflected the hopes which had been raised by the attempt to create a 'socialism with a human face'. western European socialists such as the Austrian social democratic leader Bruno Kreisky or the SFIO in France were very strong in their condemnation of the Warsaw Pact invasion.[27] It is thus not surprising that they gave a friendly welcome to a group of former Prague Spring reformers who went into exile in the west.

The initiative to establish *Listy* was taken by Jiří Pelikán, who was the director of the Czechoslovak Television from 1963 to 1968 and a political refugee in Italy from 1969 onward. In 1970 Pelikán founded the publication *Listy,* first published in Rome and later in a number of other countries.[28] Some of the copies were sold in the west, and the rest were smuggled into Czechoslovakia. Former reform Communists, who all had played a role during the Prague Spring and in its aftermath had gone into western exile, gathered around this group. Among them were Michal Reiman (in West Berlin), Zdeněk Mlynář (Vienna, from 1977), Adolf Müller (Cologne, FRG), Zdeněk Hejzlar (in Sweden), Ota Šik (Switzerland, from 1969), Eduard Goldstücker (exiled in the UK after 1968), Antonin Liehm (first in

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[25] Jiří Pelikán, 'I socialisti italiani e l'Europa dell'Est', in Alberto Benzoni et al., eds., *La dimensione internazionale del socialismo italiano* (Rome: Edizione associate, 1993), 351. See also Valentine Lomellini, *L'appuntamento mancato: La sinistra italiana e il dissenso nei regime communisti, 1968-1989* (Firenze: Le Monnier, 2010).

[26] Besier, 'Deutsche Sozialdemokratie', 159-160.

[27] Oliver Rathkolb, 'International Perceptions of Austrian Neutrality post 1945', in Günter Bischof et al., eds., *Neutrality in Austria* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2001), 8; Communiqué du Comité Directeur du Parti socialiste, 23 Aug. 1968, 403 RI 12, FJJ.

[28] Francesco Caccamo, *Jiri Pelikan: Un lungo viaggio nell'arcipelago socialista* (Venice: Marsilio, 2007), 43.

the US, then in Paris) as well as Jiří and Tomáš Kosta (in the FRG)[29]. This group primarily, and rather eclectically, sought contacts in the western left (in France Pelikán, among others, cooperated with the Lambertist Trotskyists from the *Organisation Communiste Internationaliste*, OCI, which from 1976 onwards published a French version of *Listy*). Initially, some hoped for 'Euro-communist' support. Disappointed, many afterwards moved closer to the social democratic parties.

Pelikán, having in vain attempted to establish a dialogue with the Italian Communist Party (PCI),[30] gradually got involved with the PSI. Pelikán's socialist ties actually went far back. In the mid-1950s, in Prague, he met Craxi (already a socialist) and Carlo Ripa di Meana (then a member of the PCI, but after 1956 he joined the PSI). When Pelikán arrived in Italy, Craxi and Ripa di Meana introduced him to the socialist leader Pietro Nenni.[31] From then on, the PSI would take part in several initiatives taken to support Czechoslovak dissidence. It contributed from the outset to the funding of *Listy*. Moreover, the *Biennale del dissenso* in Venice in 1977 was organized by Carlo Ripa di Meana and was strongly supported by the new leader of the PSI, Craxi.

It involved several *Listy* people in key roles (the three Czechs: Pelikán, Antonin and Mira Liehm, were – together with the Polish exiled writer Gustaw Herling-Grudziński – nominated as the directors of the Biennale).[32] The PSI, moreover, seems to have given financial support to Pelikán,[33] and in 1979 Craxi had him elected on the PSI's list for the European Parliament – a bold and symbolically highly charged initiative (Pelikán was reelected in 1984).[34]

Solid links had been established between *Listy* and several socialist parties already in the early 1970s. In 1969 Pelikán contacted the SI and from then on a number of socialist parties preferred the company of the

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[29] Dieter Segert, *Prager Frühling: Gespräche über eine europäische Erfahrung* (Vienna: Braumüller, 2008), 157.

[30] In 1976, he even applied for membership of the PCI, but never received an answer (Pelikán to Segre, 4 Nov. 1976, box 15, Fondo Pelikán, Archivio storico della camera dei deputati).

[31] Andrea Spiri and Victor Zaslavsky, 'I socialisti italiani e il dissenso nell'Est europeo', in Andrea Spiri, ed., *Bettino Craxi, il socialismo europeo e il sistema internazionale* (Venice: Marsilio, 2006), 155-181.

[32] Carlo Ripa di Meana, *L'ordine di Mosca* (Rome: Liberal Edizioni, 2007), 77.

[33] Auskunftsbericht über das antisozialistische tschechoslowakische Emigrantenzentrum "Listy", Dec. 1979, MfS 50631, ZAIG, Bundesbeauftragte für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen DDR (hereafter: BStU) Archives, 7.

[34] Jiří Pelikán, *Io, esule indigesto* (Milan: Reset, 1998), 43.

former Prague reformers to that of the post-war exiles.[35] In Stockholm, Hejzlar developed excellent relations with the local social democrats as well as ties with the Danish and Norwegian ones. He seems to have convinced the Scandinavians – the Swedes in particular – to become the main contributors to *Listy*.[36] Mlynář, exiled in Vienna after having been among the initial signatories of the Charter 77, was helped by the Austrian Social Democratic Party (SPÖ) and Chancellor Bruno Kreisky himself. Thanks to the support of the Austrians, but also, it seems, the West German SPD, he started an ambitious research project concerning the Soviet bloc countries. Within the framework of this project the SPD organized a series of annual meetings in Freudenberg with more than 60 eastern European exiles.[37] In October 1977 Brandt met Pelikán and Mlynář,[38] and a meeting two years later seems to have further strengthened the ties, in particular through financial support from the SPD for the activities of the Czechoslovak exiles.[39] Moreover, the Kosta brothers established solid links with the SPD.[40]

As far as the French, and in particular the party leader François Mitterrand, were concerned, friendly relations existed even before November 1972 when the Socialist Party (PS) organized a seminar to discuss the situation in Czechoslovakia.[41] Western European socialists thus helped *Listy* to survive, act, find a public and even have some influence. They published in the *Listy*-journal, they involved *Listy* people in political events (meetings, seminars), and they sometimes took their advice (whether it was the Swedish social democratic leader Olof Palme apparently following the advice of Hejzlar during a SI-meeting regarding the choice of invited dissidents to the SI's congress in Madrid [1980], or even with regard to the

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[35] Janitschek to Janýr, 2 Jan. 1970, folder Corr. 1969-1970, box Czechoslovakia, SIA IISH.

[36] Gunnar Lassinantti, 'Hågkomster efter Berlinmurens fall', 4 Nov. 2009, available at www.palmecenter.se/Vad-tycker-vi/Artikelarkiv/Tema/Fred/Artiklar/091104 Hagkomstereftermurensfall (last visited 2 May 2012).

[37] Thomas Meyer, '"Der Streit der Ideologien und die gemeinsame Sicherheit": Zur Diskussion um das Streitkultur-Papier von SPD und SED', in Dowe, *Die Ost- und Deutschlandpolitik der SPD*, 57-66, at 61.

[38] Auskunftsbericht über das antisozialistische tschechoslowakische Emigrantenzentrum "Listy", Dec. 1979, MfS 50631, ZAIG, BstU, 10.

[39] Beziehungen der SPD zur ideologischen Diversionsgruppe von Jiří Pelikán, 25 Aug. 1980, X/4234/80, MfS Abt. X, BStU, 809.

[40] Segert, *Prager Frühling*, 162.

[41] François Mitterrand, 'Mardi 25 juillet', *L'Unité*, 28 July 1972; see also: Gianlorenzo Pacini, 'Il socialismo dal volto umano: La straordinaria vita di Jiří Pelikán', *Nuova storia contemporanea* 10, 1 (2006), 117-158, at 151.

texts which were submitted to the East Germans during negotiations between the SPD and the SED on the 'Streitkultur-Papier' in 1987).[42] They also invited them to participate in the SI's meetings (Mlynář, Pelikán, Hejzlar and Müller participated in a meeting of the SI's General Council in September 1978; Hejzlar participated in the Vancouver Congress in 1978; Hejzlar and Pelikán took part in the Madrid Congress in 1980; Pelikán spoke to the SI's General Council in 1982).[43] The closeness of the relationship has been emphasized by Reiman who even mentions a possible affiliation of *Listy* to the SI in 1978–79.[44] While there was no formal affiliation, and while the harmony existing between the two groups should not be exaggerated,[45] the ties were undeniably close. This cooperation reflected the personal development of those involved in *Listy*. But it was also the result of a strategy consciously chosen by the group, at least since October 1977.[46]

It was made possible by a relative ideological proximity, as well as by the fact that *Listy* remained an interesting actor since it maintained good connections to Czechoslovakia. The Prague Spring epitomized the belief in the reformability of the system in the east, and this idea was crucial from the *Ostpolitik's* perspective. Mlynář's social democratic connection in the 1970s could be said to prefigure that of Mikhail Gorbachev in the 1980s. Hejzlar expressed his wariness concerning what he considered the adventurism of some elements of Solidarność and in that sense he shared the social democratic fear of a destabilisation of the Polish regime (while at the same time warning against a possible instrumentalisation of the SI by the Soviet Union)[47]. And *Listy* had friends in Prague. Charter 77 chose a very different path from that of the Prague Spring, but about half of the first

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[42] Meyer, 'Der Streit der Ideologien', 61.

[43] Hejzlar to Carlsson, 23 Jan. 1981, folder SI Czechoslovakia 1980-1982 (1078) and 1981, SIA IISH; Auskunftsbericht über das antisozialistische tschechoslowakische Emigrantenzentrum "Listy", Dec. 1979, MfS 50631, ZAIG, BstU, 7.

[44] Segert, *Prager Frühling,* 162.

[45] Jiří Pelikán complained several times about what he considered to be the lack of social democratic support to Soviet bloc dissidents (Pelikán to Irmgard Hutter, folder 36, box 17; Pelikán, 'Alcuni appunti sui rapporti est-ovest per la riunionie del bureau dell' IS a Parigi 24.9.-25.9.1981', folder 38, box 7; Pelikán to Craxi, 8 Jan. 1989, folder 10, box 15, Fondo Pelikán).

[46] According to a note from the GDR secret services: Auskunftsbericht über das antisozialistische tschechoslowakische Emigrantenzentrum "Listy", Dec. 1979, MfS 50631, ZAIG, BstU, 10. Zdeněk Mlynář may have played a crucial role in this development (Peter Gowan, interview with the author, April 2009).

[47] Hejzlar to Carlsson, 9 Sep. 1981, folder 1152a. Poland 1981 and Jan 1982, subfolder Poland Jan.-Nov 1981, SIA IISH.

signatories were former reform Communists (among them were the former Minister of Foreign Affairs Jiří Hájek, the future Minister of Foreign Affairs Jiří Dienstbier, as well as Professor Jaroslav Šabata and Mlynář).[48] Western social democrats also had Czechoslovak contacts outside the *Listy* circles. There were individual cases such as Jean Pronteau, a former Communist, but member of the PS from 1973, who became a close friend of the historian Karel Bartošek in the mid-1960s.[49] Jan Kavan, exiled in London (from 1969) and a member of the Labour Party, played a crucial role in informing the west about what was going on in the east, notably by founding the press agency Palach Press (1974), and in organizing throughout the 1970s (and afterwards) clandestine transportation of publications between Czechoslovakia and the west.[50]

More revealing of social democratic policies were the relations established with independent socialists in Czechoslovakia. In 1977, the leadership of the SPD asked the parliamentarian Jürgen Schmude to get in touch with the 'socialist Czechoslovak opposition'.[51] In the late 1970s three of the key SI leaders (Brandt, Palme and Kreisky) corresponded with socialist Czechoslovak dissidents. These exchanges were invoked by the authorities in Prague when they decided to jail Jiří Müller and Rudolf Battěk.[52] Subsequently, the SI got heavily involved in the efforts to free Battěk. Véronique Neiertz, the French Socialist party's international secretary, was particularly active, but in the end it was Brandt who obtained Battek's slightly premature release by making his visit to Gustáv Husák in 1986 conditional on that release.[53] One should also mention the close relations that existed between the exiled social democrat Přemysl Janýr and the SPÖ[54].

From 1977 on, domestic opposition developed in Czechoslovakia, first with Charter 77, then with the VONS (Committee for the Defence of the Unjustly Persecuted, 1978). From the outset, the Socialist International

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[48] Petr Uhl, 'Après 1948, chez nous, très peu de personnes voulaient le capitalisme ou un retour au capitalisme', paper presented at 'Un autre printemps', conference held in Brussels, 21-22 Nov. 2008.

[49] Suzanne Bartošek, interview with the author, 14 Nov. 2007.

[50] Jan Kavan, interview with the author, June 2005.

[51] Thomas Mirow to Pelikán, 1 June 1977, folder 10, box 15, Fondo Pelikán.

[52] PL Aktuell (deutschsprachiger Pressedienst von Pravo lidu, Freier tschechoslowakischer Pressedienst), 5 Mar. 1982, 1-82.

[53] Peter Glotz, *Von Heimat zu Heimat: Erinnerungen eines Grenzgängers* (Berlin: Econ, 2005), 303-304.

[54] See for example Fischer to Kreisky, 9 May 1977, box 1, ČSSR, VII.1; Janýr to Kreisky, 16 Feb. 1987, box Promi I-Ja, Kreisky Archives.

expressed its support.[55] Max van der Stoel, Dutch social democratic Minister of Foreign Affairs, was in 1977 the first western leader to meet with a Charter 77 speaker, the philosopher Jan Patočka.[56] As early as 1977 Brandt established an informal contact with Charter 77 (his wife met among others Jiří Hájek in Prague)[57] and in 1980 the Socialist International started focusing on Charter 77, though without establishing any kind of formal relationship. In 1980, the SI invited Charter 77 to its Congress, an invitation which was renewed several times during the 1980s.[58] Obviously no chartist got permission to leave Czechoslovakia to attend the Congress, but the exile Jiří Lederer did speak on Charter 77's behalf (in 1980).

In the late 1980s, relations between westerners and eastern European dissidents intensified. This general pattern applied to the social democrats as well. However, it is clear that if there was any kind of coordination between the western parties, any such coordination which might have existed would have been informal and would not have involved everybody. In 1986, when a delegation of the Danish Social Democratic party planned its visit to Prague and tried to meet with Charter 77 people, it did not know where to find them and asked the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs for help - in vain though. Only in 1988 – and thanks to the assistance of the non-aligned (END-inspired) peace group *Nej til Atomvåben* (No to Nuclear Weapons) – could such an encounter take place.[59]

On the other hand, there were continuous relations with the SPD parliamentarian Gert Weisskirchen (SPD) and later also with one of the SPD's leading figures, Peter Glotz.[60] Towards the late 1980s, contacts were more frequent; it actually became difficult for a western leader to go east and ignore the opposition. In September 1988 the French socialist Minister of Foreign Affairs Roland Dumas met dissidents in Prague. The most high-

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[55] Interview mit Václav Havel, 'Jeder, der mich grüßt, wird identifiziert', *Der Spiegel,* 48 (1978), 27 Nov. 1978, 180, 182.

[56] Max van der Stoel, 'Principles and Pragmatism: Twenty-Five Years with the Helsinki Process', *OSCE Yearbook* 2000, 25-33, at 26-27.

[57] Brandt to Mitterrand, 7 June 1977, 403 RI 12, FJJ.

[58] Vilém Prečan, 'An Annotated List of Charter 77 Documents, 1977–1986', available at www.osaarchivum.org/greenfield/repository/osa:ef32ebea-624b-4329-8ac7-0dbb4701f354 (last visited 12 June 2013).

[59] Lasse Budtz, *Her stod vi af – Fodnoterne der skabte historie* (Copenhague: Fremad, 1998), 238 and 299.

[60] Wilhelm Knabe, 'Westparteien und DDR-Opposition: Der Einfluss der westdeutschen Parteien in den achtziger Jahren auf unabhängige politische Bestrebungen in der ehemaligen DDR', in Deutscher Bundestag, eds., *Materialien der Enquete-Kommission 'Aufarbeitung von Geschichte und Folgen der SED-Diktatur in Deutschland'*, Vol. VII/2 (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlag, 1995), 1184.

profile meeting was the breakfast which President Mitterrand had in December 1988 with Václav Havel and other dissidents[61].

Poland: Tempered Cordiality

Poland was the country in the Soviet bloc where the population most often and most successfully rebelled: in 1956, 1968, 1970, 1976, and 1980-81. However, it was only during the 1970s that western social democrats started establishing links with Polish oppositionists. Apparently, the Swedes were pioneers, since a delegation comprising a leader of the party came to Poland and met oppositionists even before the establishment of the KOR (Committee for the Defence of Workers, 1976), probably in 1974 or 1975.[62] The strong Polish emigration to Sweden, parts of which did become politically involved, played an important bridging role. In particular, Maria Borowska, exiled in Sweden from 1969 onwards and involved in the Swedish Social Democratic Party (SAP), seems to have played a key role in getting the leading circles of that party involved in support for Polish oppositionists.[63] Thus not only did the Swedes support the KOR, but they suggested that the group obtain the status of 'consultative member' of the SI – a proposal which was, however, declined by the Polish group which preferred to avoid such an overtly political label.[64]

The contrasted reactions of western European socialists to the Polish crisis constitute the best known episode in the history of the SI's attitude towards the opposition in the eastern countries. Such reactions were generally cautious – and that is valid for all western governments, which had not forgotten past Soviet interventions. However, Solidarność, or more precisely the declaration of martial law by General Wojciech Jaruzelski in December 1981, did reveal a split between those who favoured moderation (notably the SPD and the SPÖ), and those who were inclined towards a tougher stand (notably the French PS, the PSI and the Dutch). Thus, a first official statement, signed by Willy Brandt and Bernt Carlsson (respectively

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[61] Roland Dumas, *Le Fil et la pelote: Mémoires* (Paris: Plon, 1996), 373-374.

[62] Mieczysław Grudziński, interview with the author, 8 Dec. 2008. A forthcoming book by Klaus Misgeld et al. will shed more light on Swedish support for the opposition in Poland during the cold war.

[63] Gunnar Lassinantti, interview with the author, 22 June 2009.

[64] Robert Brier, 'Expanding the Cultural History of the Cold War: Poland's Democratic Opposition and the Western Left, 1976–1980', paper presented at 'Cold War Interactions Reconsidered', the 9th Annual Aleksanteri Conference held at the University of Helsinki, 29-31 Oct. 2009. It is anyhow doubtful whether that would have been accepted by the SPD: in 1980 Willy Brandt opposed inviting the KOR to the SI's Congress in Madrid.

president and secretary general of the SI) was disavowed by a majority of SI member parties who then agreed upon a more forceful condemnation of the coup.[65]

Once calm had returned to Poland, the question was which attitude to adopt in relationship to Solidarność, which was now pushed underground. Trade unions and numerous other groups got involved in supportive actions which were far from being solely humanitarian. The role of western social democratic parties in such solidarity activities was modest. In France, for instance, where sympathy for Solidarność was particularly strong, the PS refrained from getting involved in organizing help. This may not be surprising since it was at that time leading the government. But even the so-called 'second left', sometimes called anti-totalitarian left, present within the party, does not seem to have played any significant role in assisting the Poles. Michel Rocard, the political figurehead of this segment of the left and a strong sympathizer of Solidarność, had no dissident contacts in eastern Europe, and thus not in Poland.[66] The first secretary of the party, Lionel Jospin, met Adam Michnik in Warsaw in 1970 when he was a courier for the Trotskyist organization OCI and he also met Solidarność representatives in Paris. But he does not seem to have maintained any contact with oppositionists in Poland.[67]

In 1983, however, Pierre Joxe, leader of the socialist group in the French National Assembly, met Tadeusz Mazowiecki and Bronisław Geremek during a visit to Warsaw.[68] The following year Mazowiecki and Geremek met socialist senators from Italy together with a French socialist delegation. On that occasion the two Poles regretted that no SPD leader had sought to get in touch with the Polish opposition.[69] In December 1985 Brandt came to Warsaw to visit general Jaruzelski, but he did not go to Gdańsk in order to meet Lech Wałęsa. However, he did meet Mazowiecki

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[65] For an analysis of western reactions to the Polish crisis, see Helene Sjursen, *The United States, Western Europe and the Polish Crisis* (New York: Palgrave, 2003).

[66] Michel Rocard, interview with the author, 24 Nov. 2005. On France see Bent Boel, 'French Support for Eastern European Dissidence, 1968-1989: Approaches and Controversies', in Poul Villaume and Odd Arne Westad, eds., *Perforating the Iron Curtain: European Détente, Transatlantic Relations and the Cold War, 1965–1985* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2010), 215-241.

[67] Lionel Jospin, *Lionel raconte Jospin* (Paris: Seuil, 2010), 39; lettre, Jospin to Talko, 11 Mar. 1986, 449 RI 2, FJJ; note de Geneviève Domenach Chich, 29 Apr. 1985, 449 RI 6, FJJ.

[68] Jean-Bernard Raimond, *Le regard d'un diplomate sur le monde* (Paris: Félin, 2010), 71.

[69] Dorota Dakowska, 'Die Arbeit der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung in Polen zwischen 1971 und der friedlichen Revolution', *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 45 (2005), 325-352, at 343.

in Warsaw and back in the FRG he initiated an exchange of letters with Wałęsa.[70] Craxi had visited Jaruzelski in May 1985 and while he handed his host a letter concerning Michnik and other political prisoners, he does not seem to have taken advantage of this opportunity to meet oppositionists.[71]

In Denmark the Polish crisis provoked for the first time ever a conflict between the Danish Confederation of Trade Unions (LO) and the Social Democratic Party on a major foreign policy issue. LO criticized the cautious attitude of the party in 1981–82.[72] Among the Scandinavians, the Swedes went the furthest in their expression of support. Palme stated his sympathy for the struggle of the Polish people in order to obtain its fundamental trade union rights, and also voiced his hope for 'democratization in eastern Europe'.[73] Generally, however, it is noteworthy, that the SI's member parties' relations with the Polish opposition, which really did threaten the communist regime, were clearly more complicated than those entertained with the opposition in Prague, which gathered only a tiny group. On the Czechoslovak side western socialists easily found their kindred spirits – at least among the exiles. This seems to have been more difficult with the Poles.

The German Democratic Republic: The Preserve of the SPD?

Within the SI, the GDR was essentially the responsibility of the SPD. That, however, did not in itself make it an important issue for the SPD. The West German social democrats were slow at building their relations with the East German opposition. One parliamentarian, Gert Weisskirchen, played a key role in these endeavours from the early 1980s. Another one,

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[70] Bernd Rother, 'Willy Brandts Besuch in Warschau im Dezember 1985', in Friedhelm Boll, Wiesław Wysocki, Klaus Ziemer, eds., *Versöhnung und Politik: Polnisch-deutsche Versöhnungsinitiativen der 1960er-Jahre und die Entspannungspolitik* (Bonn: Dietz, 2009), 329-344; Bernd Rother, 'Zwischen Solidarität und Friedenssicherung: Willy Brandt und Polen in den 1980er Jahren', in Friedhelm Boll and Krzysztof Ruchniewicz, eds., *Nie mehr eine Politik über Polen hinweg: Willy Brandt und Polen* (Bonn: Willy-Brandt-Studien, 2010), 220-263.

[71] Spiri and Zaslavsky, 'I socialisti italiani', 178-179.

[72] Bent Boel, 'Denmark: International Solidarity and Trade Union Multilateralism', in Idesbald Goddeeris, ed., *Solidarity? Western European Trade Unions and the Polish Crisis, 1980-1982* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, Harvard Cold War Studies Series, 2010), 219-242.

[73] Klaus Misgeld, 'Solidaritet med Solidaritet: Den svenska arbetarrörelsen och demokratirörelsen i Polen omkring 1980', *Arbetarhistoria* 120, 4 (2006), 24-31, at 29.

Freimut Duwe, was also influential because of his editorial responsibilities within the publishing house Rowohlt Verlag and he had friendly relations with East German dissidents already in 1976. But officially, it took another decade for more serious contacts to develop. In 1987, the party leadership asked a group of parliamentarians (Weisskirchen, Jürgen Schmude, Horst Sielaff) to get in touch with the opposition in the GDR. And it put pressure on the GDR authorities requesting that they tolerate such exchanges. Other party officials, amongst them Erhard Eppler, Hans-Jochen Vogel (SPD's leader from 1987), Johannes Rau, Diether Posser and Hans Büchler, met oppositionists close to the church, Rainer Eppelman in particular.[74]

Paradoxes

After this brief overview of the relations between social democrats and dissidents we may identify at least three paradoxes. The first one might seem banal, but it has to be mentioned: western European socialists, whose history and ideals were closely associated with the democratization of European societies, and who were for a long time a privileged target when dissidents addressed the west,[75] for the most part did very little to help oppositionists in the east. In many parties it is possible to identify a few individuals who did go east to meet the dissidents, but they often did so in an individual capacity rather than as official representatives of their party, and in any case they were a tiny minority. The overall picture gets somewhat rosier if one includes 'the socialist area' – trade unions, foundations, intellectuals gravitating around the parties – but there, as well, one has to conclude that those going out of their way to meet the dissidents were few and far between.

One may argue, admittedly, that without the policy of détente promoted by social democrats, dissidents would not have benefitted to the same extent from the very modest room for manoeuvring which they did acquire in the aftermath of the Helsinki Final Act. And that Kreisky, Brandt and other social democrat leaders did conduct a quiet diplomacy in the direction of the communist authorities to alleviate the situation of persecuted dissi-

[74] Horst Ehmke, *Mittendrin: Von der Großen Koalition zur Deutschen Einheit* (Berlin: Rowohlt, 1994), 393; Reinhard Weisshuhn, 'Der Einfluss der bundesdeutschen Parteien auf die Entwicklung widerständigen Verhaltens in der DDR der achtziger Jahre: Parteien in der Bundesrepublik aus der Sicht der Opposition in der DDR', in *Materialien*, 1902-1903.

[75] We will not discuss the complex motivations (a mix of ideological affinity and tactical considerations) of this 'targetting' of the western social democratic and euro-communist left on part of a segment of the Soviet bloc dissidents during the 1970s and sometimes even into the 1980s.

dents.[76] However, even Egon Bahr, the *Ostpolitik*'s main architect, has admitted that social democrats did not take the dissidents seriously enough. They underestimated both the symbolic aspect of supporting them and the importance of showing the dissidents that they were on their side.[77] Social democrats will state that right-wing parties may have done even less to meet dissidents on the other side of the iron curtain. Such an excuse is hardly satisfactory, but it should attract our attention to a salient fact, namely, the extremely modest role which the big established western political parties played in the face-to-face contacts with Soviet bloc dissidents. Those in western Europe who went east to help the dissidents were generally marginal groups from extremely diverse backgrounds: far leftists (notably Trotskyists), eastern European exiles, some free spirits and after 1980 the non-aligned (END-inspired) peace groups (to which of course should be added the special but obviously crucial case of Solidarność, backed by a wide array of forces, and in particular by western trade unions).[78] The social democratic paradox is thus, in fact, one shared with the major part of European democrats, right and left.

Secondly, there was 'the SPD paradox'. This party, which more than any other has been accused of neglecting the dissidents, seems to be the one which had the most contacts with them, at least from 1985 onward. It may be argued that those contacts came late in the day and were modest in comparison to the importance given to exchanges with the communist regimes.[79] But we still have not seen any concrete evidence demonstrating that other socialist parties – the French and the Italian, for example – had more face-to-face dissident contacts in eastern Europe during this period. This will certainly not satisfy those critics of the SPD who find that Weisskirchen and others, at best, served as alibis, whose actions moreover were often hampered by the party leadership, and that more could have been expected from this party, considering its history, ideals, resources and the fact that many dissidents were (East) Germans. One could, however, note that the SPD seems to have been the only party in the west which itself has initiated a critical examination of its past and to have admitted that errors were committed.

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[76] See Kreisky to Strougal, 21 Apr. 1977, VII.1. ČSSR, box 1; Brandt to Kreisky, 10 May 1978, box ČSSR Materialien Menschenrechte, ex-box 1097; Dienstbier to Kreisky, 29 May 1980, box 7, Kreisky Archives.

[77] Egon Bahr, 'Die Deutschlandpolitik der SPD', 32.

[78] Bent Boel, 'Mai 68, la France et "les porteurs de valise" de la guerre froide', *Matériaux pour l'histoire de notre temps* 94, 2 (2009), 66-75.

[79] Some would add that considering the strong German interest for Eastern Europe it would be surprising if there was no 'spill-over' benefitting the dissidents.

Thirdly, there is 'the Craxi paradox'. Craxi presided as prime minister (1983–1987) over a 'radical divorce' between politics and morale in Italy,[80] but he was, as far as the Soviet bloc countries were concerned, a proponent of a line which may be termed 'moral', namely, that of a support for the dissidents in the Soviet bloc. He was among the socialists, and more generally among western leaders, one of those who most eagerly expressed his sympathy for eastern European dissidents, and both Havel and Wałęsa have voiced their gratitude to him.[81] That his policy to a large degree was dictated by domestic political considerations, just as was the case with the 'anti-totalitarian left' in France,[82] is obvious. But his solidarity with the dissidents also does seem to have been nourished by an intimate conviction held for many years and fortified by old friendships.[83]

Finally, while it might seem odd that the Socialist International, a transnational political organization, proved unable to agree on substantial transnational activities to support Soviet bloc dissidents, this failure is hardly surprising. Given the overall restraint shown by western social democrats at the national level, it would have been quite remarkable if a weak organization such as the SI[84] had been able to muster agreement, to mobilise resources and to coordinate help for the dissidents. Nevertheless, the transnational dimension is crucial when we want to understand western European social democratic relations with eastern European oppositionists.

First, key contacts with eastern European exiles (the most important examples being SUCEE and *Listy*) took place within the framework of the Socialist International. Second, the SI actually managed to agree on a common declaratory diplomacy (i. e., occasional resolutions condemning human rights violations in the east). Third, such common resolutions were sometimes followed up by actions taken by the individual parties. Fourth, there are examples of common or coordinated activities by smaller groups of SI member parties (e. g., exchanges with independent Czechoslovak socialists and the campaign to free Rudolf Battěk). Fifth, it seems likely that the member parties (bilaterally or within the SI framework) exchanged information about the dissidents in the east and that there were common endeavours other than those recorded in this article. More research is

[80] Paul Ginsborg, *Italy and Its Discontents 1980–2001* (London: Penguin Books, 2003), 150.

[81] Lech Wałęsa, 'Intervento', in Spiri, *Bettino Craxi*, 219-222.

[82] Michael Scott Christofferson, *French Intellectuals Against the Left: The Anti-totalitarian Moment of the 1970s* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2004).

[83] Ripa di Meana, *L'ordine di Mosca*, 159-166.

[84] Devin, *L'Internationale socialiste*, 360.

obviously needed about social democratic relations with the dissidents in general, and their transnational dimension in particular.

In conclusion, it is difficult to opt for either the neglect or the dual strategy thesis when trying to evaluate social democratic polices vis-à-vis eastern European dissidents during the cold war. Not just because it is difficult to generalize from one party to another, and even sometimes for a single party – the British Labour Party, just to name one example, was extremely heterogeneous in many respects. But also because the numerous cases of support for the dissidents do indicate that it would be unfair to term the social democrats 'indifferent' to the dissidents' fate. And that, on the other hand, it is problematic to talk about a dual strategy since the parties generally focused on the ruling communist regimes and opted for a *Realpolitik* which left very little room for the dissidents (considered as a negligible – and sometimes irresponsible – force).

That being said, the observation of the Hungarian dissident Miklós Vásárhelyi, according to which western European social democrats only knew of two attitudes towards the east during the cold war – an *Ostpolitik* reflecting an acceptance of the status quo (SPD) or the instrumentalization of the issue of the dissidence for domestic political uses (PSI) – seems to be only partially justified.[85] There were, indeed, within the social democratic movement in the west individuals who very sincerely wanted to and concretely tried to assist the dissidents. What is striking however, to limit ourselves to the sole examples of Weisskirchen (a pacifist) and Craxi (favouring the euro-missiles), is the diversity of their motives and political orientation.

[85] Miklós Vásárhelyi, *Verso la libertà: Due interviste a cura di Federigo Argentieri* (Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino, 1999), 114.

IV. The Transnational Politics of Solidarity and Peace

KIM CHRISTIAENS / IDESBALD GODDEERIS

THE EAST VERSUS THE SOUTH

BELGIAN SOLIDARITY MOVEMENTS WITH POLAND AND NICARAGUA DURING THE EARLY 1980S

For some years now, the western European reaction towards the emergence and struggle of the Polish trade union Solidarność in the 1980s has received a striking amount of scholarly attention.[1] Among the common conclusions emerging from this growing body of literature is the vision that the mobilization of western Europe in support of the persecuted Polish trade union was remarkable for its size, breadth and duration. Indeed, historians have not eschewed superlatives when it comes to describing this solidarity, praising it with adjectives like 'tremendous' and 'exceptional'.[2]

In their efforts to answer the question as to which country was number one in supporting Solidarność and to underline the importance of the support given from their respective countries, some authors have been virtually bidding against each other. They have exhausted themselves with arguments about the volume of aid and the amounts of money given to Solidarność, the breadth and vigour of the mobilization, and the eventual impact it had on the victory of the independent trade union organization in its struggle against the Polish authorities for recognition and democracy. Obviously, scholars always have the tendency to celebrate the relevance of the issues and topics they are profiling. Apart from this, when substantiating their claims about the exceptional breadth and size of the western

[1] In October 2010, the Polish Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) organized a grand-scale conference entitled 'Świat wobec Solidarności: The World towards Solidarity Movement 1980-1989' in Wrocław, gathering scores of historians from across the world who were working on the topic. A recent reference work is Idesbald Goddeeris, ed., *Solidarity with Solidarity: Western European Trade Unions and the Polish Crisis, 1980-1982* (Lexington: Lanham, 2010).

[2] Natalie Bégin, 'Kontakte zwischen Gewerkschaften in Ost und West: Die Auswirkungen von Solidarność in Deutschland und Frankreich. Ein Vergleich', *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte*, 45 (2005), 293-324, 300, 303; Andrzej Chwalba and Frank Georgi, 'France: Exceptional Solidarity?', in Idesbald Goddeeris, ed., *Solidarity with Solidarity*, 191-218.

European reaction towards Solidarność, historians have usually turned to making comparisons with the reactions towards other issues and dissident movements beyond the 'iron curtain', reactions which were in fact more limited, if not virtually absent.[3] Indeed, with its proportions in terms of size and duration and its volume in aid, the mobilization in support of Solidarność dwarfs the short and feeble one that came in reaction to the crushing of the Prague spring in 1968, or the virtually non-existent one for Poland in 1956. Even the strong but short solidarity with the Hungarians in 1956 pales by comparison to the attention and mobilization developed for Solidarność for many years during the 1980s.

Yet, the nature and character of the solidarity movements in support of Solidarność have to date scarcely been put in the broader perspective of transnational solidarity movements that identified with issues in the other part of the cold war world, namely, the Third World. However it may be, in common use, it is with the north-south rather than with the west-east direction that the term of 'solidarity movements' has conventionally been associated.[4] It should be remembered that the 1980s were also a period in which solidarity movements with the Third World mushroomed for a final time prior to much of their work being taken over by more professionalized NGOs in the 1990s. Among the most prominent of these solidarity movements were those for Nicaragua and Central America, where a US intervention by the Reagan Administration loomed over the region in reaction both to the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua in 1979 and the support of the Sandinistas for insurgencies in other Central American countries, notably El Salvador and Guatemala.[5] While the western European supporters of Solidarność feared a Soviet intervention against Polish dissidence, scores of committees of activists rose up at the same time opposing (under the slogan 'Central America, No Second Vietnam') both American intervention in Central America and the mostly hostile foreign policy stance of its western allies towards the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua.[6]

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[3] Kim Christiaens, Idesbald Goddeeris and Wouter Goedertier, 'Inspirées par le Sud? Les mobilisations transnationales Est-Ouest pendant la guerre froide', *Vingtième Siècle: Revue d'Histoire,* 109 (janvier-mars 2011), 155-168.

[4] Reinhart Kössler and Henning Melber, 'The West German Solidarity Movement with the Liberation Struggles in Southern Africa', in Ulf Engel and Robert Kappel, eds., *Germany's Africa Policy Revisited: Interests, Images and Incrementalism* (Münster, Hamburg and London: LIT Verlag, 2002), 103-126.

[5] Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War* (Cambridge e. a: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 339.

[6] Robert Graham, 'British Policy towards Latin America', in Victor Bulmer-Thomas, ed., *Britain and Latin America: A Changing Relationship*, (Cambridge et al.: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 52-67, at 64.

In this article, then, we want to set the mobilizations for Solidarność and for Sandinista Nicaragua next to each other. Did these two transnational solidarity movements have more in common than merely developing simultaneously during the 'second cold war' of the 1980s and their respective claims to the title of 'solidarity movement'? Or, do the differences between them mean that they were lived out in completely separate worlds from one another? Indeed, on the face of it, the differences are obvious when viewed from the respective sides of both the donors and the recipients of the solidarity. Whereas the solidarity in support of Solidarność came mainly from 'old social movements' and notably trade unions, the activists for Nicaragua have been attributed mostly to the new social movements that had emerged since the 1960s and were characterized by the grassroots dimensions of the new left.[7] Whereas Solidarność was supported by conservatives and neo-liberals such as Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher, those very same cold warriors were hostile to the Sandinistas (with members of the Reagan administration even clandestinely supporting their enemies). The domestic situation also differed for Poland and Nicaragua. Indeed, whereas Solidarność struggled as a dissident trade union movement for recognition and democracy, the Sandinista Liberation Front (FSLN) held power over Nicaragua from the revolution in 1979 until it lost the elections in 1990.

In sum, the causes of Solidarność and the Sandinistas in Nicaragua were not only remote from each other – separated by geography, ideology and the virtual boundaries between the three worlds of the cold war constellation – but were also juxtaposed by other factors. Nonetheless, it does make sense to compare them, since both of them triggered solidarity movements abroad and it is precisely these movements into which we want to inquire. We will argue in this article (through comparisons) that the solidarity movements in support of Solidarność and Nicaragua shared in common the ways in which they were donors or suppliers of solidarity, dependent on and shaped by the opportunities and input coming from the recipient or requiring countries. In hinting at the causes for the trajectories of the mobilization for Solidarność and Nicaragua, this article will bring in the role of Polish and Nicaraguan *acteurs*, something which has to date been mostly neglected in the national readings of solidarity movements. Indeed, whereas accounts have to-date been resolutely centred on the role of the donors of solidarity, we will show how these donors were conditioned in their ideology, actions, outlook and strategies by the lines set out by the recipients of this solidarity. We will do so by starting from the case of the Belgian solidarity towards Solidarność and the Sandinistas in Nicaragua,

[7] Martin Klimke and Joachim Scharloth, eds., *1968 in Europe: A History of Protest and Activism, 1956–1977* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

but will also try to develop a model which might be usefully extended to other western European countries. We will also regularly expand our view to other solidarity movements, such as those for Cuba, Vietnam and Chile. Informed by the cross-fertilization of research by both authors on the solidarity movements with Solidarność and for Nicaragua and other Third World countries, this contribution will shed a new transnational light on these solidarity movements, which becomes an invitation for further research.[8]

1. Solidarność in Belgian Society

When strikes broke out at the Lenin shipyard in Gdańsk in mid-August 1980 and led to a dynamic escalation of a protest movement, Poland suddenly became front page news. In the next years, the struggle of the newly founded independent Polish trade union Solidarność for democracy and trade union rights would remain a fixture in the foreign news pages in Belgian newspapers and media. Lech Wałęsa, with his iconic moustache, and the dark spectacled General Jaruzelski proclaiming martial law on television on 13 December 1981 were images well-known to the Belgian public, and are till to-date associated in Belgian public memory with the struggle of Solidarność. However, that such awareness and name recognition by themselves did not spur concrete support became very clear in the months following the foundation of Solidarność. Belgian society might well have been sympathetic towards the Polish workers and their quest for more democracy under the leadership of Wałęsa, but it initially remained very silent when it came to turning this sympathy into action. The development of the Polish workers' movement and the foundation of Solidarność in September 1980 could be followed in the media and press. Yet, for several months virtually no action of public support beyond words and declarations was undertaken, neither by trade unions, NGOs or other established organi-

[8] See for instance: Idesbald Goddeeris, 'The Transnational Scope of Western Labour's Solidarity with Solidarność', *Labour History Review*, 75, 1 (2010), 60-75; Idesbald Goddeeris, 'Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych "Solidarności": Biuro Koordynacyjne NSZZ "Solidarność", 1982–1989', *Pamięć i sprawiedliwość*, 2 (2006), 315-347 and 1 (2007), 309-334. Kim Christiaens, 'States Going Transnational: Transnational State Civilian Networks and Socialist Cuba and Sandinista Nicaragua Solidarity Movements in Belgium (1960s-1980s)', *Belgisch Tijdschrift voor Filologie en Geschiedenis/Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire*, 89, 3/4 (2011), 1277-1306; Kim Christiaens, 'Een verdedigingslinie van de revolutie: Nicaraguacomités in België en politieke solidariteit in een transnationaal netwerk (1977-1990)', *Brood en Rozen: Tijdschrift voor de Geschiedenis van Sociale Bewegingen*, 14, 4 (2009), 28-49.

zations, nor by grassroots initiatives. The Belgian government, too, continued its normalization policy with the Polish government.[9]

In view of the lack of reaction from Belgian society and notably from the trade unions, the latter being expected by the nature of the issue to give prominence to the developments in Poland, Belgian media even started explicitly wondering why the society remained so passive in the days following the outbreak of protest in August 1980.[10] It was only on 26 August 1980 that the Belgian Christian and socialist trade unions eventually publicly declared their sympathy with the Polish workers. In the following weeks, via articles in their trade union press, bulletins and related newspapers, they continued to give publicity to the developments in Poland such as the Gdańsk Agreements and the foundation of Solidarność in September 1980.[11] In so doing, they could draw on a stream of information provided by their respective international trade union confederations, the World Confederation of Labour (WCL) and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), which had been among the first to declare their support for the Polish workers in August 1980.[12]

Despite their wordy declarations of support, however, Belgian trade unions undertook no further public action. Several explanations were given at the time and now in retrospect have been invoked to account for this initial absence of public support actions. Notably, there is the argument that, considering the international character of the issue, the national trade unions committed the Polish issue to the headquarters of the WCL and ICFTU, their traditional guides in international issues, and that a cautious approach was necessary in order not to jeopardize the chances of Polish workers' success. To be sure, some truth does lie in this explanation, yet this was not the only reason. An often overlooked yet just as obvious fundamental reason was the initial absence of contact between the Belgian trade unions and the workers in Poland. These were not only necessary for turning support into concrete action, but were also required for what was an even more fundamental precondition, namely, a mutual acquaintanceship between Solidarność and its supporters abroad. Indeed, beyond the information provided by the press and their international confederations on

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[9] Sprawozdanie za rok 1980, s. 7, 1980, 1 Belgia, Bg 23, D IV 43/84 and Notatka, December 1980, 1981, 1 Belgia, Bg 23, Archives of the Polish Foreign Ministry, Warsaw (hereafter: MSZ).

[10] *Le Soir*, 21 Aug. 1980.

[11] Idesbald Goddeeris, 'Belgium: The Christian Emphasis', in Idesbald Goddeeris, ed., *Solidarity with Solidarity,* 244.

[12] Kim Christiaens, 'The ICFTU and the WCL: The International Coordination of Solidarity', in Idesbald Goddeeris ed., *Solidarity with Solidarity*, 101-127.

Solidarność, Belgian trade unions had little knowledge about the newly founded Polish trade union, the course it wanted to go, its specific needs for support, and the ways in which it could be materially helped.

The importance of direct contact and relations with Solidarność became clear some months later when the first public support actions for Solidarność followed in the wake of the establishment of a working relationship between Solidarność and some Belgian trade union sectors. Indeed, piggybacking on the networks of the international trade union confederations ICFTU and WCL, Solidarność started reaching out to the headquarters of the Belgian trade unions and engaged in a targeted lobbying of supporters, notably via the sending of delegations to Belgium and invitations to meetings with the trade union's leadership in Poland. In November 1980, a Solidarność delegation, consisting of Józef Przybylski and Zygmunt Zawalski, visited the Belgian Christian trade union ACV/CSC (*Confédération des syndicats chrétiens/Algemeen Christelijk Vakverbond*), which was to be the first in a series of visits by Solidarność delegations to the Belgian Christian and socialist trade unions and their international confederations.[13] Conversely, delegations of the Belgian Christian and socialist trade unions travelled in the course of 1981 to Poland at the invitation of Solidarność, attending for instance the first Solidarność congress in September.

The initiative for building and tightening connections came less from the Belgian trade unions than from Solidarność itself, which became increasingly aware of the value of external contacts.[14] Having established a constituency at home during the first few months of its existence, the Polish trade union soon realized that international contacts were crucial to its domestic chances for success. They could give further legitimization and material assistance. Simultaneously, Solidarność was cautious, fearing that it would open itself to accusations of being a political movement rather than a trade union. Nor did it want to be accused of being an instrument of foreign intervention by searching too openly for alliances with any foreign groups (a charge being aired in the state propaganda). Therefore, Solidarność preferred to access trade unions, building on the tradition of international labour solidarity.

Solidarność not only reached out to the trade unions of big western European countries, it also showed interest in presenting its cause to the Belgian trade unions which at the time played a crucial role in the management of the international trade union confederations, and furthermore were

[13] Goddeeris, 'Belgium', 245.

[14] John Earle, 'Solidarity Seeking to Develop Relations with Western Unions', *The Times*, 17 Jan. 1981.

endowed with important financial resources.[15] Yet, obviously, even if contact and connections were important as preconditions, the love had to be mutual. Indeed, the degree to which the Christian and socialist trade unions answered Solidarność's efforts at rapprochement differed. The Belgian Christian trade union and its network of related organizations belonging to the Christian 'pillar' was the most receptive sector of Belgian society to Solidarność's request for support, and it became the most important *acteur* when it came to organizing support actions. Several factors were involved. For one thing, there was the strong involvement of the Belgian trade union ACV/CSC in the rather small World Confederation of Labour (WCL), whose secretary-general, Jan Kułakowski (a Belgian of Polish origin), served as an intermediary between Solidarność and Belgian trade unionists, and served Solidarność delegates well in getting an entrée to the Belgian Christian workers' movement.[16]

For another thing, Solidarność had a Catholic identity and struggled for trade union rights and democracy in the 'Second World'. This profile was quite welcomed by the Christian trade unions and fit their ideological agenda, whose room for manoeuvring on international issues (notably in the Third World, such as for Vietnam, Chile and Nicaragua), had been very limited due to the policy of its international confederation. Because the membership of the WCL consisted mainly of trade unions in the Third World, which were mostly marginal to the domestic scene of their countries, the international Christian trade union confederation had, for example, been forced to take a low profile in the mobilization for Chile during the 1970s, often leading to internal tension and frustration among its rank and file. Now, the policy of the WCL seemed to be in line with the course of the trade union's rank and file.

Indeed, over and above the strategic and ideological motivations in the offices of the WCL and ACV/CSC leadership, the impetus for action on Poland came from below, from some regional sections and groups inside the Christian pillar, with most of them being able to rely on their own connections with Poland. Whereas the leadership of the Christian trade union focused on political and moral support for the newly founded Polish trade union, local sections started the collection of humanitarian aid, often making use of the networks of Polish immigrants or networks of the Catho-

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[15] Idesbald Goddeeris, 'Western Trade Unions and Solidarność: A Comparison from a Polish Perspective', *The Polish Review,* 52, 3 (2007), 205-229.

[16] Patrick Pasture, 'Jan Kułakowski: From Exile to International Trade Union Leader and Diplomat', in Michel Dumoulin and Idesbald Goddeeris, eds*., Integration or Representation? Polish Exiles in Belgium and the European Construction* (Louvain-la-Neuve: Academia Bruylandt, 2005), 111.

lic church.[17] Important in this context was the ACV/CSC Polish Section, uniting the Polish workers affiliated to the Christian trade union, which stimulated the leadership of the ACV/CSC in the development of further contact with Solidarność.[18]

Solidarność found a rather ambivalent reception among the quarters of the Belgian socialist trade union ABVV/FGTB (*Algemeen Belgisch Vakverbond / Fédération Générale du Travail de Belgique*). The latter supported Solidarność via financial donations as part of its commitments to the ICFTU, which had set up a solidarity fund for Poland. Moreover, ABVV/FGTB president Georges Debunne (just like his colleagues of the ACV/CSC) attended the first Solidarność congress in September 1981. Yet, support actions beyond those staged at the initiative of the ICFTU were non-existent. This contrasted with the socialist trade union's participation in various NGOs and grassroots initiatives oriented towards Third World issues, especially after the mobilization against the coup in Chile in September 1973. The ABVV/FGTB was, for instance, involved in the foundation of the National Chile Committee in Belgium, materially supporting local solidarity groups and Chilean refugees. All this had happened with a synergy between the directives of the ICFTU – which stimulated its affiliates to take part in campaigns on Chile – and initiatives from below by its rank and file who were active in local Chile committees. The ABVV/FGTB leadership's ability to mobilize public action on behalf of Solidarność, however, was severely limited because support from its rank and file was largely lacking. For many Belgian trade union militants, who demonstrated in droves against the Chilean dictator Pinochet, and who worked for causes in Chile, Nicaragua, and other Latin American countries, or were active in peace movements, support for Poland – in addition to Solidarność's Catholic overtones – had a smell of the anti-communism and cold war politics pursued by the ICFTU and its American affiliate AFL-CIO.

Throughout the 1980s, it would be commonplace among these Third World solidarity groups to complain about the extensive attention to Poland, and then to place the east-west policy of the leadership of Belgian trade unions and governments against the background of north-south relations, and vice versa. It was with much frustration that an activist for Chile wrote in the early 1980s: 'In mainstream media, you can read everything about Wałęsa and Solidarność, but you find scant information about Chile

[17] The local trade union section in the regional town of Mechelen, for example, collected aid which it sent to a Polish priest with whom they were in contact for some time after his visit to Belgium. *Het Volk*, 22-23 and 26 Aug. 1981.

[18] Idesbald Goddeeris, *Polonia belgijska w pierwszych latach po II wojnie światowej* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Semper, 2005), 91-92, 135-140.

and Nicaragua. It is therefore our task to inform Belgian citizens about Chile and Nicaragua, rather than heating up east-west tension and working with the logic of the cold war.'[19] Although it can be said that these activists linking east-west and north-south so intimately were more than they imagined actually part of the cold war logic they wanted to escape, it is important to keep this thinking in mind, as it is key to understanding why many Third World groups were so adverse to becoming involved in actions for Poland. This would remain a constant during the 1980s, even if support in Belgian society intensified after martial law.

The proclamation of martial law in December 1981 by General Jaruzelski drew universal opprobrium and provoked in Belgian society a groundswell of protest against the Polish authorities. The Belgian Christian and socialist trade unions jointly condemned the coup, just as they had done in the wake of the Chilean coup of 1973. In the days following the proclamation of martial law, they organized a national strike (to last five minutes), protested with telegrams and petitions to the Polish embassy in Brussels, and staged demonstrations with their regional sections in various cities across the country, drawing some hundreds or thousands of participants.[20] Along with the Belgian trade unions, political groups ranging from the extreme left to Belgium's conservative government coalition were united in their condemnation of the military coup in Poland.

Humanitarian relief operations for Poland soon became the main way for giving a form to solidarity with Poland, as they seemed for activists far more effective than organizing demonstrations and other protest actions. In several cities and even small-sized towns, local informal and temporary committees were set up with a view toward collecting food, clothes and drugs. Collected aid was transported by a ship that departed from Antwerp under the coordination of the Belgian Red Cross, as well as via several trucks filled with tons of aid. At the Catholic university of Leuven, the academic staff collected 750,000 BEF (almost $19,000), purchased aid and sent this in a truck to the Catholic university of Lublin, while the Free University of Brussels collected food and drugs to be sent to the academic hospital of Gdańsk.[21] Whereas these relief operations were successful when measured by the volume of collected aid and the media attention they gained, they were also marked by a lack of coordination. When Belgian

[19] Letter from Erna Foubert to local Chile committees, sine dato (probably 1981-1982), Archives Chile Committee, Amsab-ISG, Antwerp.

[20] *Le Journal Indépendance Le Peuple*, 19-20 Dec. 1981; Belgijskie reakje na stan wojenny w Polsce, s. 5, 1982, 1 Belgia, Bg 22, D IV 8/86, MSZ; *Het Volk*, 17 Dec. 1981.

[21] *La Dernière Heure*, 29 Dec. 1981; *Le Journal Indépendance Le Peuple*, 30 Dec. 1981.

groups wanted to do 'something' for Poland, they tried to do it their own way, making use of channels they could find in their own environment. For instance, the local committees for the collection of aid set up in the weeks after the coup were driven by Belgians with Polish origins or families, who offered channels for passing aid to Poland. Similarly, the Catholic university of Leuven sent its aid to the Catholic university of Lublin, since it had had for many years close relations with this university.[22] While the indignation caused by the proclamation of martial law seems to have spurred activities on behalf of Poland, truly effective trade union support had been rendered much more difficult. With the outlawing of Solidarność, the traditional routes for the Belgian Christian trade union ACV/CSC to support its Polish counterpart had largely disappeared. The Belgian Christian trade union and its leadership, consequently, played a more supporting rather than a leading role in the relief activities undertaken in Belgian society in the weeks following the coup. This was because they had to rely on connections their local groups and sections had with Poland for channelling collected aid. Despite the fragmentation, however, the collected aid in the circles of associations, local trade union sections, and workers' organizations belonging to the Christian pillar was impressive: in a time span of only 6 months, more than 30 million BEF (more than $650,000) was collected by June 1982 to be used for food, clothes and other relief.[23]

It was only following input from Polish *acteurs* that the Christian trade union ACV/CSC could develop a more coordinated role in supporting Solidarność. In July 1982, Polish trade union activists (who had been stranded in the west by martial law) established Solidarność's Coordinating Office Abroad in Brussels in order to coordinate a more centralized support campaign which would meet the needs of the Polish trade union now continuing its activity underground.[24] Led by Jerzy Milewski and close to the international headquarters of the ICFTU and WCL, the Coordinating Office was a vital link between Solidarność's leadership inside Poland and the international trade union movement. It had an important role in passing information, setting the agenda and pointing to courses available for action by the international confederations and their affiliated members. As part of their commitments to their respective international confederations, the Belgian Christian and socialist trade unions financed the Brussels office of

[22] Louis Vos, 'Leuven, Louvain and Poland', in Michel Dumoulin and Idesbald Goddeeris, eds., *Integration or Representation? Polish Exiles in Belgum and the European Construction* (Louvain-la-Neuve: Academia Bruylandt, 2005), 13-29, 25.

[23] *De Volksmacht*, 10 and 11 Sept. 1982.

[24] Idesbald Goddeeris, 'Lobbying Allies? The NSZZ Solidarność Coordinating Office Abroad, 1982-1989', *Journal of Cold War Studies,* 13, 3 (2011), 83-125.

the Coordinating Office Abroad. In turn, the Coordinating Office Abroad provided a conduit for structural, organizational and technical aid to the disbanded trade union. Making use of the new opportunities, in November 1982 the Christian trade union launched a campaign to spread information about the situation in Poland accompanied by the sale of solidarity candles.[25] Although alternative channels continued to function, actions for Poland proceeded in the next years increasingly via the Polish connections of the ACV/CSC, which founded in 1985 a National ACV/CSC Commission Poland-Solidarność after the secret visit of two of its representative to Poland.[26]

In sum, this closer look at Belgian solidarity with Solidarność reveals the crucial role of Polish militants. Trade unionists from Poland, paying a visit to western Europe, were key to the setting up of the solidarity campaign. Older networks revived, for instance between Catholic universities or Polish immigrants' descendants and their relatives and contacts in the Polish People's Republic. Solidarność itself had a decisive voice in determining the contents of the aid, whether it was humanitarian or technical. The Solidarność Coordinating Office Abroad, seated in Brussels, was the vital link between the Polish underground and its supporters. At the end of the day, the Polish opposition had a great share in the colouring of the solidarity movement. The mobilization of the support for Nicaragua was not different.

2. Defending the Revolution: Solidarity with Nicaragua

In July 1979, following a lengthy armed struggle, a revolution led by the Nicaraguan Sandinista Liberation Front (FSLN) overthrew the Somoza regime, which had ruled over the Central American country for several decades. The revolution brought a government of national reconstruction under the leadership of the young Sandinista *guerillero*, Daniel Ortega, into power.[27] The Sandinista revolution attracted much attention across western Europe and grew into a symbol for many Third World activists. A US-backed regime had been defeated by a popular movement whose young

[25] Goddeeris, 'Belgium', 252.

[26] Notes of Maurits Walraet to the president, 7 and 14 Mar. 1985, No. 30, Documentatie- en Onderzoekscentrum voor Religie, Cultuur en Samenleving, Leuven (hereafter: KADOC); letter of ACV president Jef Houthuys to Leo Tindemans, 30 Apr. 1985, No. 31, KADOC.

[27] Matilde Zimmermann, *Sandinista: Carlos Fonseca and the Nicaraguan Revolution,* (Durham: Duke University Press), 2007, 69-87.

charismatic leaders sought to construct a new society via grand-scale economic and social reforms. With dictatorships clinging to power over most of Latin America, this could not but have a great symbolic value for activists who had in previous years established committees and organizations focusing on countries such as Chile, Brazil and Argentina. Comparisons were made between the triumph of the FSLN in Managua and Castro's seizure of Havana twenty years earlier.[28]

Yet, unlike the Cuban revolution which occupied only the small niche of the extreme left in the intellectual market, the Sandinista revolution resonated across political and ideological borders. Even in the Belgian Christian trade union movement, there were – at least initially – positive voices which saw the revolution as the start of a peaceful revolution across Latin America.[29] Much of it had of course to do with the terror by the Somoza regime. Furthermore, the policy of non-alignment professed by the new regime, tied in with *dependencia* school of thinking, which had in the 1970s grown into the main paradigm in circles of Third World solidarity activists and which advocated an independent course for Third World countries, freed from the bipolarity of the cold war system. Additionally, the Sandinista revolution also fitted theories of liberation theology: the inclusion of Catholic, self-declared 'revolutionary' priests such as Ernesto Cardenal and Miguel d'Escoto in the new government seemed for many progressive Christians proof that revolution and Christianity were compatible.

After the Sandinista take-over, scores of activists and leaders of NGOs like Oxfam-Belgium and Socialist Solidarity travelled to Managua looking for ways and projects to help reconstruct the completely ruined country. The backbone of the actions in Belgium, however, was made up of local solidarity committees which sprang up in various cities like Brussels and Antwerp and even in smaller-sized towns. The activists in these committees collected money and informed public opinion via meetings and bulletins about Nicaraguan reality and the ambitious plans of the new leaders in Managua. The committees were marked by the great variety in their ideological background, organisation and profile.[30] In Leuven, a committee was established by students. In Bruges, solidarity with Nicaragua took shape in a Central America committee with a strong Christian inspiration, while the committee in Ghent had a more Trotskyite character. In Hasselt, militants of the Christian trade union ACV/CSC, who had been in contact with Nicaraguan exiles residing in Belgium before the revolution, established a

[28] *Solidaridad. Maandelijks Tijdschrift Latijns-Amerika*, 15 Sept. 1979, 3.

[29] *De Volksmacht*, 9 Oct. 1980.

[30] Kim Christiaens, 'States Going', 1293.

local committee. In most of the committees, however, the organizational form of a 'committee' enabled activists to gather around to support Nicaragua beyond their own political and ideological divisions, according to the recipe drawn from previous mobilizations for countries such as Algeria, Vietnam or Chile.[31]

Despite their grassroots appearance, these committees were not entirely spontaneous responses to events in Latin America. Most of them emerged out of committees formed back in 1977 by Nicaraguan exiles. While many of the latter returned to their country, they had established networks through which contact and the flow of information continued. Many of the Belgian activists made use of these contacts to arrange a stay in Nicaragua, which were very often the immediate cause of the foundation of a local committee. In Belgium, the Nicaraguan embassy in Brussels, led by the former exile and newly appointed ambassador, Gonzalo Murillo Romero, functioned for many activists as a place where they found information and opportunities for working on Nicaragua. The strong grassroots dimension of these early local and informal committees, however, soon became encased in a more organized and structured network, which came not so much from the activists themselves as from the Sandinista government, which aimed at integrating and transforming them into a well-structured and coordinated movement. Commandante Bayardo Arce's visit to the Belgian activists in the spring of 1980, then, was more than an informal meeting or sign of gratitude from the Sandinista authorities.

Instead, this central figure of the Sandinista revolution urged the activists to professionalize their committees and to organize them with more structure and coordination.[32] At the organizational level, the locally based committees were brought together under a National Nicaragua Coordination, where they discussed national actions and joint projects.[33] This national coordination was in turn integrated into a European coordinative structure, with a European Secretariat in Utrecht (The Netherlands) and regular conferences attended by representatives of the solidarity committees from across western Europe as well as FSLN delegations. With this struc-

[31] Kim Christiaens, 'Die Suche nach wirksamer Solidarität: Der vietnamesische Faktor bei der Mobilisierung gegen den Vietnamkrieg in Belgien in den 1960er- und frühen 1970er-Jahren', *Jahrbuch für Forschungen zur Geschichte der Arbeiterbewegung,* 11, 2 (2012), 77-101.

[32] Meeting Nicaragua Committee Ghent, 18 Mar. 1980, No 119, Archives Jules Verhelst (hereafter: AJV), Centre of Communist Archives in Belgium, Brussels (hereafter: DACOB); *Links: Weekblad voor een Strijdend Socialisme*, 22 Mar. 1980, 4-5.

[33] Kim Christiaens, 'States Going', 1293-1294.

ture, the FSLN tried to canalize and enhance the effective power of its western European supporters in line with its interests.

In the first months after the Sandinista revolution, the local committees focused their activities mainly on spreading information about the situation in Nicaragua and on collecting funds and setting up projects for the reconstruction of the country, notably in the framework of the literacy and reconstruction campaign by the Sandinista government. A variety of easily accessible activities, such as information stands and evenings focused around a Nicaraguan movie or a speaker from the FSLN (provided via the Nicaraguan ambassador or the Secretariat in Utrecht), combined the aims of both public sensitization and the collection of funds. In Ghent, for example, the local solidarity committee, which was made up of students and people active in local Third World groups, organized a solidarity evening in the famous socialist meeting centre 'De Vooruit', where about 400 people listened to performances by the Chilean group Sonkoy and attended an exposition with pictures made by an activist during his stay in Nicaragua.[34] It is quite obvious that the funds collected during these informal and local activities were far from impressive and yielded only a few thousand Belgian Francs. Greater amounts of money were gained from projects at the level of the National Centre for Development Cooperation, the umbrella organization of Belgian NGOs for development cooperation recognized by the Belgian government. The Nicaragua committees submitted a number of projects to this Centre to take advantage of the co-financing policy of the Belgian government.[35]

The Belgian solidarity committees, however, had to recognize that the administrative and organizational burden of submitting such extensively documented projects went beyond what they could shoulder with their group of volunteers. Therefore, they tried to cooperate with more professionalized NGOs that also had a great interest in Nicaragua, notably Socialist Solidarity and OXFAM-Belgium. They functioned in several ways for these NGOs: as a source of information on Nicaragua, as an entrée to official Nicaraguan state agencies, and above all as an avenue to combine the administrative work inherent to the projects done in the headquarters of NGOs with public activities to garner attention from grassroots groups for projects in Nicaragua.[36]

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[34] Nicaragua Committee Ghent, Feb. 1980, AJV, DACOB.

[35] Projects Nicaragua, 11.11.11., Archives National Centre for Development Cooperation, Brussels.

[36] OXFAM-Solidariteit vzw, *1964-2004 Veertig Jaar voor een andere Wereld: Oxfam in België: Een verhaal, een beweging, een strijd* (Brussels: Oxfam-Solidariteit, 2004), 12-13.

Not only did the Nicaragua solidarity committees have to recognize their limited capacity to collect large amounts of money for the reconstruction of Nicaragua, but they also encountered many difficulties in executing what they saw as their main task: providing the public with reliable information. Indeed, the lack of information about Nicaragua in mainstream Belgian press and media confirmed activists in their conviction that the committees had to counter a disinformation campaign promoted by the US and conservative forces in western Europe.[37] Constraints were not so much on the output side. Although it remained difficult to get access to mainstream media, activists could inform Belgian society about Nicaragua through a variety of ways: an assortment of bulletins, newsletters and journals of a various Third World organizations to which they were connected via their members, and through speaking tours in schools and information stands during activities organized by related Latin America solidarity groups, such as The Friends of Cuba. The greatest constraint was at the input side. A substantial amount of the activists' time and energy was devoted to simply collecting information, books and pictures about the developments of Nicaragua, something which stimulated many of them to learn Spanish. Yet, in 1980, when activists of local Nicaragua committees in Antwerp, Liège or Leuven surveyed their information, all they could refer to was a small box of mostly dated publications, most of them in Spanish, complemented by some telegrams, letters or reports forwarded by the Nicaraguan embassy in Brussels or the National Coordination of solidarity committees.

Communication among local committees improved significantly with theirintegration into a nationwide network around the National Nicaragua Coordination, whose meetings took place in the Nicaraguan embassy in Brussels and whose secretariat received regular information on the policies of the FSLN via the European Secretariat in Utrecht. Participation in European conferences or telegrams from Nicaragua sent via the Brussels embassy further helped the situation. But ongoing complaints about the lack of a consistent and sufficient flow of information regularly gave food for discussion when western European solidarity committees met delegates of the FSLN and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during the European conferences when they were sketching out the chalk lines for the solidarity movements.[38]

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[37] Nicaragua, 1980, Oxfam-Belgium, Archives Committee Europe Latin America, Brussels.

[38] European Conferences of Nicaragua Solidarity Committees after the Madrid Conference in 1979, Private Archives Hans Langenberg, Secretary European Nicaragua Movements, Utrecht (hereafter: PrA HL); National Coordination, 26 Mar. 1985, No. 124, Midden Amerika Komitee (hereafter: MAK), Amsab-ISG, Ghent.

The constraints on information were part of broader discussions and internal debates about the identity and function of the committees, which came to the foreground in the meetings and communication between western European solidarity activists and the Nicaraguan Foreign Ministry in the months after the Sandinista take-over. Even worse, for some activists the problems in organization and communication were seen as more than the growing pains of the network, but were interpreted as a sign of the Sandinista authorities' lack of interest in the added-value of solidarity committees. This situation changed fundamentally in early 1981 when Ronald Reagan's assuming office as President of the US signalled a hardening of American foreign policy toward the Sandinistas.

The renewed interest of the FSLN in the power of solidarity expressed itself in the organization of the *Encuentro de Comités de Solidaridad con Nicaragua*, staged from 26 to 31 January 1981 in the capital Managua and attended by delegations from western European committees together with an impressive delegation of about 70 people from the US.[39] Organized against the background of a hardening US policy against Nicaragua, this grand-scale meeting, attended by the *capita selecta* of the Sandinista Liberation Front, was a place where solidarity with Nicaragua was defined in ideological and practical terms. Ideologically, the lengthy speech by FSLN leader Tomás Borge to the about one hundred and fifty solidarity activists from around the world, placed Nicaragua in the lineage of the combative international solidarity movements which had developed for Vietnam and Chile. Over and above the projects which were presented to the committees for work inside Nicaragua, the idea for the creation of Anti-Intervention Fronts was launched, which the FSLN set out as a strategic priority for its solidarity movements abroad. Inspired by the mobilization against the Vietnam War, the goal of these fronts was to create a broad protest movement against US foreign policy, notably by reaching out to the on-going peace protests against the arms race.[40]

Whereas the idea was taken over by several western European groups, Belgian activists needed more time to be convinced of the feasibility of the

[39] *La Dirección Nacional en el Primer Encuentro Internacional de Solidaridad con Nicaragua "El Salvador vencerá!* (Managua: Departamento de Propaganda y Educación Política del FSLN, 1981); Documents First International Meeting of Solidarity with Nicaragua, 1981, No. 72, Nicaragua Komitee Nederland (hereafter: NKN), International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam (hereafter: IISH); *El Día*, 27 Jan. 1981.

[40] European Nicaragua Meeting in Genève 'El movimiento anti-intervencionista debe incorporarse y participar en los moviementos anti-imperialistas que se desarrollen a nivel suizo y europeo', Oct. 1981, No. 72, NKN, IISH.

project.[41] Eventually, what was instrumental in overcoming their scepticism was the example of other western European committees, and the persistence of the FSLN during European meetings. As other western European committees planned a European wide anti-intervention campaign, the Belgian National Nicaragua Coordination set up a Flemish and Walloon Anti-Intervention Front in October 1981. It aimed at mobilizing a protest that was as wide as possible (after the example of that against the Vietnam War) and was timed to dovetail with the international campaign staged by the European Nicaragua committees. Despite the embeddedness of the Nicaragua activists in the broader network of Third World and Latin America organizations and groups in Belgium, the foundation of this Anti-Intervention Front was not an easy job. Practically, it raised debates about who would shoulder the organizational and practical burden. Furthermore, making this front presupposed a tactical frame to rally as many groups as possible and to make the Central American anti-intervention issue compatible with the agenda of the peace movement in Belgium.

In a time span of a few months, the platform text of the Anti-Intervention Front was signed by more than 250 organizations, ranging from political parties on the left (the socialist and communist parties) to peace organizations like Pax Christi and to NGOs like Oxfam. It organized regular demonstrations in front of the US embassy in Brussels and the house of the Belgian Foreign Minister, Leo Tindemans, to protest against the foreign policy of the Reagan Administration towards Central America and the Atlantic policy pursued by the Belgian government.[42] The Anti-Intervention Front helped empower the Nicaragua committees to develop political lobbying and to bring the issue of Central America into political arenas. A group of parliamentarians drawn from the Belgian Socialist Party, Communist Party and Agalev (Green party) formed a group of 'Politicians against Intervention' (*Politiekers tegen de Interventie*).[43]

The Belgian solidarity committees benefited more broadly from the renewed interest of the FSLN in their work. The increased access to information via FSLN publications such as *La Barricada Internacional* and a stream of telegrams and telexes from Managua invigorated the solidarity activists' information campaigns, who then started their own bulletins to counter growing negative rumours of human rights violations by the

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[41] Encuentro de Paris, Resumen de Actividades, 18-20 Apr. 1981, No 72, NKN Komitee Nederland, IISH.

[42] Het Anti-interventiefront: hoe en waarom? Voorkomen dat het erger wordt, *Solidaridad*, 112 (1981), 8.

[43] Verslagen en briefwisseling van de Nationale Coördinatie: Politieke analyse, sine dato, No. 124, MAK, Amsab-ISG.

Sandinista regime. Information, however, was not simply drawn from FSLN publications and journals, but was also based on the personal experiences of an increasing number of activists who went to Nicaragua in the framework of so-called 'solidarity brigades'. After the Sandinista government had launched a worldwide appeal to its solidarity committees to form an international brigade to help with the coffee harvest in November 1983, in the years following, the committees recruited a few hundred people in Belgium to form volunteer national brigades to contribute personally to the Nicaraguan revolution.[44]

Yearly, a summer and winter brigade composed of a few dozen Belgian activists went to Nicaragua, where they worked during several weeks on projects granted by the FSLN, such as the construction of schools and health centres or they helped with the harvest, notably of coffee and cotton. These brigades were not informal outings, but were strongly managed and regulated by the CNSP (*Comité Nicaragüense de Solidaridad con los Pueblos*), the official FSLN organization which coordinated the work of the brigades inside Nicaragua. For their part, the participants went through training by the Nicaragua committees in the weeks before their departure. In the period of 1983-1987, more than 250 Belgians participated in these brigades with an additional 200 activists participating in brigades organized by the Catholic Labour Youth or regional sections of the ABVV/FGTB and the ACV/CSC.[45] The importance of these brigades was less so the actual help they provided than the personal experiences they afforded to the activists. A central aim of this form of action was that, after their return, *brigadistas* could function, in the FSLN's own terms, as 'little ambassadors' of Nicaragua in the west.[46]

The economic situation of the country was dramatic, and it was exacerbated by the effects of the Contra War, the American economic embargo, and boycotts from international organizations like the World Bank. In response to this, efforts for finding material and financial aid for the FSLN and Nicaragua gained prominence from 1984 onwards, with the main intermediary being the *Fundación Agusto César Sandino* (FACS), which was a state agency coordinating the help of foreign NGOs in Nicaragua.

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[44] Roger Peace, '*Peace Movements and the Cold War in the Third World: The Case of Sandinista Nicaragua*', paper presented at 'Peace Movements in the Cold War and Beyond', LSE-Conference, London, 1-2 Feb. 2008.

[45] *Amérique Centrale: Périodique Mensuel*, 91/92 (1989), 38; Roger Peace, *A Call to Conscience: The Anti-Contra War Campaign* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2012), 157.

[46] Hazel Smith, 'Revolutionary Diplomacy Sandinista Style: Lessons and Limits', *Race & Class*, 33 (1991), 69.

After the FACS had launched a campaign for medical aid, the Belgian Nicaragua committees organized a variety of fund-raising activities such as cultural performances by Latin American groups, door-to-door collections, expositions, and lobbying of politicians and local trade union groups. These succeeded in collecting 600,000 BEF for the purchase of an ambulance.[47]

The most important relief campaign was the worldwide action *Nicaragua Debe Sobrevivir* (Nicaragua Must Survive), which was launched by Nicaraguan authorities, with the country on the verge of bankruptcy. In Belgium, local committees set up their own campaigns such as the collection of kitchen materials, drugs, school materials, and the organization of a Third World café.[48] The committees also lent their support to the grand-scale relief action set up in 1984 by Belgium's biggest NGOs for development cooperation, (these included organizations such as OXFAM and *Broederlijk Delen / Entraide et Fraternité*). These groups countered the opposition of the Belgian government against development projects for Nicaragua by forming a mini-consortium organizing joint projects for development cooperation. It grew in the following years into a forum for coordinating efforts on behalf of Nicaragua.[49]

It should be clear that the local Nicaragua committees did not operate in isolation in Belgium, but formed part of a broader movement consisting of NGOs, Third World and peace groups, and local trade union sections which were inspired by Nicaragua. Thanks to their privileged relation with the FSLN, the committees – although informal in structure – could take a central role in this movement: relations with the FSLN provided not only legitimacy; they also had an important agenda-setting function. As it was expressed by the Sandinista diplomat Francisco de Asís Fernández during his visit to Belgium in 1984, it was the task of the solidarity committees to function as defenders of the revolution by reaching out to sectors in Belgium's society which were critical or hostile towards the Sandinista regime.[50] More specifically, trade unions were among the preferred organizations where the Nicaragua solidarity movement tried to find support. This was not only because of their important resources, but also because of the influence they could have on the Belgian government and at the level of their international confederations. These efforts, however, were met with scepticism from the leadership of both the Christian and socialist trade

[47] Meeting of the National Coordination, 10 Oct. 1984, No. 124, MAK, Amsab-ISG.

[48] Nicaragua Committee, Meeting of the National Coordination, 26 February 1986, Mol.

[49] Sandino Vive!, 11.11.11., No. 1444, Archives NCOS, Brussels.

[50] Speech by Francisco de Asís Fernández, President of the CNSP, 06 Oct. 1984, No. 124, MAK, Amsab-ISG.

unions, which were bound to the policies of their respective international confederations, which supported their affiliated Nicaraguan members in their struggle against control by the Sandinista authorities.[51] Yet, the committees succeeded in mobilizing support in the circles of some regional sections, which opposed what they saw as the cold war thinking of their trade unions, and then founded trade union support groups for Nicaragua and participated in several brigades.[52]

Making up the Balance

Beyond the fact that they were simultaneously active in Belgian society during the 1980s, the mobilizations in support of Solidarność and Sandinista Nicaragua seem to have had little in common. Organizationally, they rested on different *acteurs*. Solidarity with Poland came about mainly via trade union circles and notably in the quarters of the Christian workers' movement. On the other hand, the mobilization for Nicaragua was channelled through committees of activists working in cooperation with a locally based network of Third World groups. These had their roots in previous solidarity campaigns for Vietnam, Chile and other Latin American countries, as well as with a number of well-established NGOs for development cooperation. Despite the grassroots and local dimension of the Nicaragua committees, they formed part of a well-coordinated western European movement which launched joint campaigns, worked towards common goals, and organized regular meetings between activists of different countries under the auspices of Sandinista diplomats.[53]

The solidarity movements for Poland and Nicaragua were not only virtually separated from each other, there existed also a strong antagonism toward one another. Jerzy Milewski regularly attempted to give Solidarność a more international profile by connecting it to other causes, but he never referred to Nicaragua. In the second half of 1982, he travelled to Venezuela and Mexico, and in 1983 he visited Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Kenya,[54]

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[51] Nicaragua, No. 22-26 and No. 56, KADOC.

[52] Trade Union Movements and Solidarity, sine dato, No. 124, MAK, Amsab-ISG, 7 ff.; *Nieuw Links*, 26 June 1987, 7 and 9.

[53] European Meetings (1979-1985), PrA HL.

[54] Wojciech Gontarski, 'Biuro Koordynacyjne NSZZ "Solidarność" za granicą w Brukseli', master's thesis, Akademia Spraw Wewnętrznych, Instytut Kryminalistyki i Kryminologii, Warszawa 1989, 66, retrieved at Archiwum Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej (hereafter: AIPN), 01521/2175, letter from J. Milewski to the TKK, Brussels, 7 May 1983, AIPN, BU 01820/49, vol. 11, 227-230.

but he particularly linked the Polish crisis with the ones in Chile and South Africa. The Solidarność Coordinating Office Abroad sent a message of solidarity to the Chileans on 11 September 1983, on the tenth anniversary of Pinochet's coup, and Wałęsa invited the Chilean fellow unionist Rodolfo Seguel to the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony.[55] Similarly, Solidarność issued a message on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Soweto massacre and regularly referred to common successes, such as the Nobel Peace Prize awarded to Wałęsa in 1983 and to Desmond Tutu in 1984, or the exclusion of both Poland and South Africa from the ILO.[56]

It is true that it was sometimes difficult to find a balance, since both the South African and the Chilean opposition identified far more with the left than did Solidarność. Sometimes, this international contextualization led to internal criticism.[57] However, what matters here is the total absence of reference to Nicaragua, which seems to have been entirely at odds with Solidarność. When the German writer Günter Grass highlighted similarities between Solidarność and the Sandinistas after a visit to Nicaragua, he was fiercely criticized by the Poles.[58] Conversely, the Sandinista leader Bayardo Arce pooh-poohed parallels (drawn by western European social democrats of the Socialist International) between the Polish and Central American crises.[59]

This is not surprising. Nicaragua and Poland could be seen as each other's mirror image at another side of the cold war world. Nicaragua was threatened by the United States' hostility; Poland was threatened by the Soviet Union. Unsurprisingly, therefore, the solidarity campaigns organized on behalf of the two countries similarly were in an antagonistic relationship both organizationally and ideologically. The mobilization for Solidarność was characterized by an almost complete absence of any criti-

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[55] *Solidarność News,* 7-8 (25 Sept. 1983) and 11 (15 Nov. 1983).

[56] *Solidarność News*, 71 (30 June 1986). See for instance also a special file on Apartheid in Zdzisław Najder's papers kept at the Ośrodek Karta in Warsaw (file Biuro Zagraniczne 'S', 1986).

[57] When Milewski protested against the South African recruitment of labor forces in Polish refugee camps in Vienna, and the consequent increasing immigration of Polish (white) workers, he was fiercely criticized in South African and by other Polonia organizations. See: *Solidarność News*, 10 June 1983, 1 and Edward de Virion, 'List otwarty do Pana J. Milewskiego', *Kultura*, 429 (June 1983), 170-171.

[58] Günter Grass, 'Im Hinterhof: Bericht über eine Reise nach Nicaragua', *Die Zeit*, 40, 1 Oct. 1982, 45 and 'Istnieją granice siły: Rozmowa Przeglądu Politycznego z Günterem Grassem', *Przegląd Polityczny*, 3 (1984), 3-15.

[59] Fernando Pedrosa, 'Políticas informales y redes trasnacionales: Los socialdemócratas europeos en los procesos de democratización de la tercera ola en América Latina', *Anuario de la Escuela de Historia Virtual* 2, 2 (2011), 52-53.

cal edge towards Belgian society or the Belgian government. Rather, actions for Solidarność had a strongly conformist character. Even if activists did not say it in so many words, they often seemed to be more motivated by anti-Soviet feelings than by a generalized aversion to the bipolarity of the cold war international order. The Nicaragua movement, on the other hand, was a countermovement, characterized by a strong opposition not only against the foreign policy of the Belgian government, but also against the existing societal and cultural situation in the First World in general. It modelled itself in the tradition of the mobilizations against the Vietnam War and the Chilean coup, which were staged by activists who found in international issues and the drama of the Third World ammunition for fuelling their unrest with Belgian society.

As noted above, activists of the Nicaragua committees and other Latin America solidarity groups frequently complained about the overwhelming media attention and support for Solidarność. There seems to be some truth in it. In the volume of collected aid and money, the mobilization for Solidarność dwarfed those for Nicaragua and other Third World countries, even if Belgian NGOs, via various development projects, provided millions of Belgian Francs in aid to the Central American country during the 1980s. Even the collected aid for the Chilean resistance during the 1970s seems not to have come up to the level of the support for Poland in the 1980s. Also, in terms of media attention, the issue of Poland clearly overshadowed many international issues at stake in the 1980s.

Yet, there were also important limitations in the mobilization for Solidarność. Compared to the repertoire of actions and colourful expressions of solidarity towards Nicaragua, the mobilization in support of Solidarność was rather monotone and colourless. Building on the experiences of previous Third World solidarity campaigns (such as those for Cuba, Vietnam and Chile), activists mobilizing for Nicaragua expressed their solidarity in a variety of ways welding political activism to cultural exchange and personal experience to public collective action. They combined political lobbying with excursions into Nicaraguan culture and cuisine, which included learning Spanish and travelling to Nicaragua where they worked in brigades to contribute to the Nicaraguan revolution. They hosted various Nicaraguan music groups and artists like the famous singer Carlos Mejía Godoy to perform during public actions and they screened Nicaraguan movies. In doing so, they benefitted from multiple connections with Nicaragua, not only via indirect contact through letters and journals, but also via direct personal contact through stays in Nicaragua or regular meetings with Sandinista diplomats and politicians, all of which stimulated this exchange. This variety in the repertoire of actions was largely absent from the mobilization in support of Solidarność.

After the apogee of humanitarian operations in the wake of the declaration of martial law in 1981, which were loosely organized rather than well-coordinated, actions in support for Solidarność retreated into the headquarters of Belgian trade unions, which were largely invisible to public view. Indeed, solidarity with Solidarność became very quickly the realm of some high-ranking trade union leaders who travelled to Poland, met with Solidarność delegates in a discreet atmosphere, provided political support via discreet contact and redirected financial support through discrete transfers to the account numbers of their international confederations or those of the Solidarność Coordinating Office.

What explains these differences? As alluded to above, the solidarity movements in support of Nicaragua and Solidarność were populated by groups with different traditions of solidarity. Whereas solidarity with Poland modelled itself in the tradition of international labour solidarity, the Nicaragua solidarity movement was tied in with that international solidarity as practiced during the Vietnam War. It also drew its inspiration from earlier solidarity campaigns, such as those supporting the opposition against Franco in Spain or the Algerian independence movement.[60] In hinting at the causes of the different nature of these solidarity initiatives, however, it is important not to look exclusively for explanations at the supply or donor side, as has traditionally been done in the literature. Indeed, studies of solidarity movements have overwhelmingly been centred on the role and agency of activists and the inspiration that propelled them to take action for issues beyond their own country.[61] Factors such as domestic ideology and instrumentality on the side of activists have been advanced as the main reasons why solidarity movements emerged.[62]

The strategic location of the struggle of Solidarność or that of Sandinista Nicaragua in the bipolar cold war has conventionally been put forward as the main reason why these causes provoked so much reaction within particular groups, whereas other issues went largely unheeded. From this per-

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[60] Thomas Olesen, 'Globalising the Zapatistas: From Third World Solidarity to Global Solidarity?', *Third World Quarterly* 25, 1 (2004), 255-258.

[61] Kim Christiaens, 'Making Solidarity Effective: The Interaction between Vietnamese Actors and Solidarity Activists in the Mobilization for Vietnam in Belgium in the 1960s and early 1970s', in Berthold Unfried & Eva Himmelstoss, eds., *Die eine Welt schaffen: Praktiken von "Internationaler Solidarität" und "Internationaler Entwicklung". Create One World: Practices of "International Solidarity" and "International Development"* (Leipzig: Akademische Verlagsanstalt, 2012), 185.

[62] Dieter Rucht, 'Distant Issue Movements in Germany: Empirical Description and Theoretical Reflections', in John A. Guidry, Michael D. Kennedy and Mayer N. Zald, eds., *Globalisations and Social Movements: Culture, Power, and the Transnational Public Sphere* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), 76-105.

spective, solidarity is mostly understood as an endogenous phenomenon in which activists shaped the content and contours of solidarity themselves, whereas the recipients of this solidarity rather passively received this support. In short, solidarity movements have traditionally been understood as a one-way street between active donors and passive recipients abroad.

It should however be clear, as we have tried to demonstrate in this article, that both Polish and Nicaraguan *acteurs* played a crucial role in the emergence, development and nature of the solidarity that developed in Belgium. The solidarity actions cannot be understood apart from them. In assigning emphasis to the active role of the recipients of solidarity, we may appear to be moving towards the conclusions of the political scientist Clifford Bob. He conceptualized (in his well-known study *The Marketing of Rebellion*) the interaction between political movements demanding support and the overseas audiences supplying the support as a relationship of demand and supply in which demanders of support have to actively deploy marketing strategies to gain international attention for their cause.[63] Yet, whereas Bob has argued that it is the donating *acteurs* who eventually shape the recipients, this study makes clear that the reverse is also true, because it is not always clear who the demanders and the suppliers are. Solidarność in Poland and the FSLN in Nicaragua sought support abroad, but were also confronted with demands from activists who were keen to put their solidarity into practice.

Indeed, in many aspects, the ways in which Belgian groups concretized their support for Nicaragua and Poland were determined and conditioned by the input they received from the Nicaraguan and Polish movements they identified with. This input was in turn dependent on the existence and availability of connections through which contact and information could proceed. For example, the reason why the Christian trade union largely abstained from support actions immediately after the Polish coup of 1981 was mainly rooted in the fact that even if it had the will, it did not have or see any means or channels for organizing support. After the defeat of the FSLN in the elections of 1990, Nicaragua committees ran dry, to a large degree because the flow of information which had been proceeding via the diplomatic channels of the FSLN stopped abruptly. Although crucial, information was only one aspect.

For another thing, the strategic and tactical lines set out by the FSLN and Solidarność provided direction for much of the solidarity work, and explain to a large degree the different outlooks of the mobilizations for

[63] Clifford Bob, *The Marketing of Rebellion*: *Insurgents, Media, and International Activism* (Cambridge et al.: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Clifford Bob, 'Merchants of Morality', *Foreign Policy*, 129 (2002), 36-45.

Nicaragua and Poland. Solidarność, being a trade union itself, had a special preference for accessing trade union groups for garnering support. Moreover, it was concerned that support by political parties or groups could give credence to accusations that Solidarność was not a trade union but a political movement dependent on foreign support. The Brussels Coordinating Office led by Milewski, therefore, prioritized working discreetly via the offices of the trade unions, rather than engaging in public actions. Such limitations were absent from FSLN foreign policy, whose priority was in mobilizing as many groups as possible to find an entry to governments and in this way to change western European policy towards Nicaragua.[64]

As part of the public diplomacy of the FSLN, Nicaragua activists, then, were pushed to establish as many connections as possible with other groups, to find support among trade unions and political parties, and to engage in public actions to bring the issue of Nicaragua to the fore. Moreover, the opportunities for solidarity actions in Belgium for Poland or Nicaragua were strongly determined by the agenda given by Solidarność and the FSLN, which suggested to their supporters ways to concretize their solidarity in order to fit their interests, thereby providing them with templates for action. The idea of organizing solidarity brigades to Nicaragua was not a creation of Belgian activists, but of Nicaraguan authorities. Conversely, the technical aid provided to the Polish underground was asked for by the Polish dissidents. Obviously, for various reasons, the degree to which solidarity activists were dependent as donors on the strategic, programmatic and practical input from the receiving side was mostly not something that they publicly advertised. Rather, they have conventionally presented and seen their engagement in terms of spontaneously generated actions, driven by a plethora of moral, political and ideological concerns. It is a discourse that many historians have to date easily adopted and widely spread in their writings, but that we have tried to counterbalance with this article.

[64] Héctor Perla, 'Si Nicaragua vencío, El Salvador vencerá: Central American Agency in the Creation of the US-Central American Peace and Solidarity Movement', *Latin American Research Review,* 43, 2 (2008), 136-158.

KACPER SZULECKI

'FREEDOM AND PEACE ARE INDIVISIBLE'

ON THE CZECHOSLOVAK AND POLISH DISSIDENT INPUT TO THE EUROPEAN PEACE MOVEMENT, 1985-1989*

There are certain 'miraculous years' which attract the attention of scholars and beat out the rhythm of European history. The year 1985 is not traditionally one of them, and in the symphony of dissent it is usually treated as a moment of silence before the spectacular finale of 1989. Staying with the musical metaphor, I propose to see the 1980s rather as a long crescendo finishing with the climactic 'velvet revolutions'. In this narrative, the spring of 1985 marks the tipping point of a Europe-wide cooperation of social movements for peace and human rights. That year saw the emergence of the most important peace initiative born in eastern Europe, the publication of several important and inspiring texts, as well as an unprecedented intensification of trans-border contacts, both across the iron curtain and within the Eastern Bloc. So far, however, all this remains underresearched.

Compared to the number of studies dedicated to the emergence of the dissident movements in central and eastern Europe in the 1970s, the rise of Solidarity in 1980 and the wave of 'velvet revolutions' in 1989, the 1980s remain a relatively unexplored period. This is especially true in the Polish dissent historiography, and one of the key reasons is methodological. That decade is of interest mostly for historians who, in central and eastern Europe,[1] are trained within national paradigms. This 'methodological

* This chapter is based on some results of the doctoral research project entitled 'The Figure of the Dissident', conducted under the auspices of the Cluster of Excellence 'Cultural Foundations of Integration' at the University of Konstanz. The author would like to thank Robert Brier, Jacek Czaputowicz, Padraic Kenney and Julia Szulecka for their comments and assistance.

[1] The differentiation between 'central' and 'eastern' Europe is made consciously throughout the text. The latter is synonymous with the eastern bloc, while the former refers to Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland.

nationalism' as some scholars term it,[2] is a useful approach and will remain fundamental because it is also closer to the real-world, local experience of politics and social issues. However, because of the limitations of their nationally focused methodological apparatus, many historians fail to notice the shift in dissident action, towards a more international – or better – transnational strategy that occurred during the 1980s. As the scholar and dissident Bohdan Cywiński rightfully remarked, the Polish 'Freedom and Peace' Movement (*Wolność i Pokój* – WiP), one of the major phenomena of late 1980s dissent, was special because it was 'sitting astride the barricade' – it was at the same time of the east and of the west.[3] In other words – it was a transnational movement in terms of its focus, strategy and ideas.

In the remainder of this chapter, I fill in this historiographical gap to some extent by looking at interactions across the iron curtain and across internal bloc borders, which in the 1980s led to the emergence of a pan-European peace movement. In looking at the contacts between the western peace movement and the central European dissidents in the 1980s, my aim is not merely a recapitulation of the various open letters and encounters. I show the circulation of ideas across the divided Europe and argue that the dissident movements played an important role in this dialogue. In fact, they influenced the peace movement so that it changed its course from disarmament to the idea of 'indivisible peace' – that freedom and peace cannot be separated or played out against each other.

Forced to select only the most important elements of the transnational network of peace groups, I focus on the Czechoslovak Charter 77 and the Polish WiP as well as the Societal Resistance Committee (KOS), although East German and Hungarian groups also played a role. On the western side I look at those parts of the peace movements that were, first of all, willing to discuss fundamental issues and secondly, were interested in maintaining contacts with the independent groups in the east. Here I mean especially the European Nuclear Disarmament (END), (understood, according to Peter Baehr's distinction, as the political organization, not the mass social move-

[2] Cf. Smith and Kutz-Flamenbaum, who go as far as to claim that 'the assumption that conflicts are bounded by national polities blinds the researcher to the ways these conflicts are shaped by a larger world system.' Jackie Smith and Rachel Kutz-Flamenbaum, 'Prisoners of Our Concepts: Liberating the Study of Social Movements', in Simon Teune, ed., *The Transnational Condition: Protest Dynamics in an Entangled Europe* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010), 211-227, at 211 and 218.

[3] Bohdan Cywiński's contribution to the panel 'Jednostka wobec państwa, państwo wobec wyborów etycznych jednostki' at the conference 'Bezpieczeństwo i Tożsamość', Warsaw, 8 Oct. 2011.

ment,[4]) as well as other western European organizations that were independent but linked to END (i.e. the Dutch IKV – Inter-church Peace Council, the French CODENE – The Committee for the Denuclearization of Europe), as well as the German 'Greens'.

I shall begin with a review of the theoretical and empirical literature constituting the 'transnational approach' to position my work within it. I then move on to the story of the dialogue between the Czechoslovak and Polish dissidents and the western peace activists, showing the way in which the definition of peace and the priorities of the peace movement were altered because of the transnational exchange.

Astride the Barricade: Why Do We Need a Transnational Approach?

It is only recently in dissent studies that there has been a realization that while the iron curtain and the inter-state borders of the eastern bloc were quite tight, they were not hermetic.[5] During the cold war the 'diffusion of western media, cultural items and practices into eastern Europe was an important interface across the ideological divide',[6] and one should also add that this was not a one-way process. This means that trans-border exchanges, influences, inspirations and dialogues existed, and it does not suffice to put together single-country case studies to understand the influence of dissent.[7] Phenomena that may have seemed very important domestically were at times not even noticed beyond borders. And, conversely, events of seemingly little domestic importance acquired *transnational* significance, which could sometimes have indirect domestic consequences in what resembles the 'boomerang' theorized by Margaret Keck and

[4] Peter Baehr, 'E. P. Thompson and European Nuclear Disarmament (END): A Critical Retrospective', *Online Journal for Peace and Conflict Resolution*, March 2000. For a larger discussion of the END see: Patrick Burke, 'European Nuclear Disarmament: A Study of Transnational Social Movement Strategy', Ph.D. thesis, University of Westminster, 2004, available at http://westminsterresearch.wmin.ac.uk/8504/1/Burke.pdf (last visited May 2011).

[5] Robert Brier, 'Transnational Culture and the Political Transformation of East-Central Europe', *European Journal of Social Theory* 12, 3 (2009), 337-357.

[6] Kathrin Fahlenbrach, Martin Klimke and Joachim Scharloth, 'Preface,' in Hara Kouki and Eduardo Romanos, *Protest Beyond Borders* [New York, Oxford: Berghahn, 2011], ix-x, at ix.

[7] This is still a largely dominant approach, especially among central and eastern European historians of dissent. See: International conference *The World towards 'Solidarity' Movement 1980-1989*, IPN, Wrocław 21-23 Oct. 2010.

Kathryn Sikkink.[8] Simon Teune defines transnationalisation as 'pluri-local relations of entanglement beyond national borders'.[9] In approaching this field, I look for common ground between studies in transnational movements and transnational (intellectual) history in order to devise a theoretically informed historical and *transnational* narrative of central European dissent in the 1980s. In terms of content, I support the already existing studies of the 'second wave of transnational protest', focusing on peace movements with a non-western perspective, emphasizing the role of the dissidents and young opposition movements. This research also tries to reinforce Padraic Kenney's studies of the 1980s opposition with an analysis of the circulation of their ideas. To Robert Brier's focus on prominent dissident intellectuals, it adds a wider panorama of less known figures.[10]

This chapter, rather than discussing theoretical implications of such an approach, focuses on telling the *story* of central European dissent from a transnational perspective. I trace local events (meetings), social facts (the establishment of movements) and actions (publishing letters) and try to show both their transnational roots and transnational implications (most importantly, their reception and interpretation abroad).

In an attempt to show the importance of dissident intellectual input to the peace movement, I analyse the *circulation* of ideas and notions. Circulation, according to the conceptualization of Benjamin Lee and Edward LiPuma, must 'be conceived as more than simply the movement of people, ideas and commodities from one culture to another';[11] it is a dialectic process in which novel qualities and meanings are created. Summing up, I look at the transnational (that is, trans-local entanglements of locally rooted actors) to understand where the inspirations for similar practices and ideas came from, to pinpoint the ways in which intellectual value added was

[8] Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998).

[9] Simon Teune, 'Protest in the Transnational Condition', in Teune, *The Transnational Condition*, 1-19, at 2. The definition draws on Ludger Pries, *Die Transnationalisierung der sozialen Welt: Sozialräume jenseits von Nationalgesellschaften* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2008).

[10] Padraic Kenney, *A Carnival of Revolution: Central Europe 1989* (Princeton, Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2002); Robert Brier, 'Adam Michnik's Understanding of Totalitarianism and the West European Left: A Historical and Trans-national Approach to Dissident Political Thought', *East European Politics and Societies*, 25, 2 (2011), 197-218.

[11] Benjamin Lee and Edward LiPuma, 'Cultures of Circulation: The Imaginations of Modernity', *Public Culture* 14, 1 (2002), 191-213. See also Debra Spitulnik, 'The Social Circulation of Media Discourse and the Mediation of Communities', *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 6, 2 (1997), 161-187.

produced in dialogue across borders and to grasp the way various local actions had trans-local consequences.

Towards a Dialogue: Disarmament on the Agenda

In 1976, the USSR began deploying a new model of mobile, middle-range nuclear missiles known under their NATO code name SS-20. Three years later, NATO responded with the so-called 'double track decision' to deploy Pershing and Tomahawk middle-range missiles while simultaneously offering the Warsaw Pact negotiations about a limitation on this type of weapon system. Together with two other circumstances – the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the election as US President of the 'hawk' Ronald Reagan – the turn of the decade saw a definite move from détente towards what many call the 'second cold war'.[12] Within the emerging 'nuclear crisis' in Europe, *disarmament* and *peace* became dominant terms in political discourse, leading to the formation of a massive western European movement of protest against the new missiles as well as the nuclear arms race in general.

The 'peace movement', as it grew to be called, was a diverse and amorphous coalition of very different societal and political groups. It did on the whole, however, have a certain left-wing leaning, which together with its critical attitude towards the immediate actions of the western governments – NATO – and its visible anti-Americanism, made it a very popular topic of eastern European media coverage. Groups with openly pro-Soviet attitudes or sympathies for some Soviet policies - while a small minority in the peace movement at large - nevertheless played a visible role (most notably within the British CND).[13] What is more, the official (state sponsored) eastern European peace organizations were perceived as legitimate partners for a dialogue over peace issues, and the legitimacy of the communist governments was not questioned.[14]

While large parts of the peace movement were suspicious of the USSR and the Warsaw Pact, protests emerged exclusively in response to NATO's nuclear armament plans and it was the dual track decision that it tried to

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[12] Philipp Gassert, Tim Geiger and Philipp Wentker, eds., *Zweiter Kalter Krieg und Friedensbewegung: Der NATO-Doppelbeschluss in deutsch-deutscher und internationaler Perspektive* (München: Oldenbourg Verlag, 2011).

[13] Benjamin Ziemann, 'A Quantum of Solace? European Peace Movements during the Cold War and Their Elective Affinities', *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 49, (2009), 351-388.

[14] Maciej Śliwa, 'Ruch "Wolność i Pokój" 1985–1989', MA thesis, Uniwersytet Jagielloński, 1992, 27. Also: Burke, 'European Nuclear Disarmament', 111-112.

reverse. Western unilateral disarmament, moreover, was a widely popular demand of the peace movements. The idea behind it was that a one-sided disarmament by the west could be a gesture of good will, enhancing trust and allowing the return to détente policies. To the immediate critical argument that the Soviets maintained conventional arms supremacy in Europe and that they would strategically benefit from such a move, the standard reply was the slogan 'better red than dead'. Garton Ash mentioned Heinrich Albertz, 'one of the grand old men of the West German peace movement' and quoted him as stating, when asked about the Polish crisis: 'There is nothing more important than peace.' 'This sentence' – Garton Ash claimed – 'commanded widespread assent among young peace activists in the free countries of western Europe. If it came to the choice, they said, we would rather live under Soviet domination than risk a nuclear war.'[15] It was the fear of nuclear Armageddon that provided a justification for the peace movement's claims. A German intellectual agreed that among the western pacifists there was indeed 'a tendency to articulate the conflict with the regimes in the east cautiously, in the light of the ultimate goal of peace'.[16]

Because of this attitude and the way it could be used by communist propaganda, the peace movement was highly problematic for central European dissenters, requiring a response from them. From the beginning of the 1980s, the dissidents were gradually taking on the 'peace question', engaging in a dialogue with their western activist counterparts and in this dialogue attempting to alter certain previously unquestioned notions. The following story of this dialogue – by tracing both the actual exchange of texts and the circulation and diffusion of ideas – aims at showing the importance of the dissident input.

Initial Standpoints

END was a coalition of groups gathered around a common manifesto – the *Appeal for European Nuclear Disarmament* (1980),[17] which emphasized the societal demand for nuclear disarmament and inter-bloc détente. The END

[15] Timothy Garton Ash, 'Solidarity and the Peace Movement', in his, *The Polish Revolution: Solidarity 1980-1982* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1983), 332-337, at 335-336.

[16] H. J. Schädlich in: Krytyka, 'Po dwóch stronach muru. Rozmowa z J. Fuchsem, H.J. Schädlichem i J. Strasserem', *Krytyka [samizdat]* 25 (1987), 206. All translations from Polish and Czech are by the author.

[17] END Committee, 'Appeal for European Nuclear Disarmament (END),' in Gearóid Ó Tuathail, Simon Dalby and Paul Routledge, eds., *The Geopolitics Reader* (London, New York: Routledge, 1998), 95-96.

Appeal's diagnosis of the international situation in the coming years was extremely pessimist:

> We are entering the most dangerous decade in human history. A third world war is not merely possible, but increasingly likely […] We are now in great danger. Generations have been born beneath the shadow of nuclear war, and have become habituated to the threat. Concern has given way to apathy. Meanwhile, in a world living always under menace, fear extends through both halves of the European continent.[18]

The crucial motive for action in the west seemed to be *fear of nuclear annihilation*. Prominent figures of the peace movement strongly rejected the idea that their actions were in any way driven by fear. And yet an analysis of their rhetoric calls for the use of this word, without necessarily implying any normative judgments by that.[19] Not meaning to say that eastern Europeans were in any way more 'courageous', Václav Havel pointed out that 'people in the West are, for various reasons, more afraid of war than we are.'[20] What he meant was that for many of the eastern 'independents', peace was the goal, but not an absolute one.

That was the crucial difference in the east-west dialogue over peace. From the fear of a nuclear war and the belief in its high probability grew the focus on disarmament. The western activists insisted on 'protesting for survival' – for peace as the absence of war, because in their view the prevailing international conditions *were* in fact *a state of war*. Eastern dissidents, apart from the East Germans perhaps, saw things rather differently.[21] They acknowledged the *possibility* of a nuclear war, but a possibility was *not yet reality*. The war in Afghanistan was a reality, but the western 'peace movement', as Havel could not help pointing out, hardly noticed it.

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[18] END, 'Appeal', 95.

[19] Cf. Susanne Schregel, 'Konjunktur der Angst: "Politik der Subjektivität" und "neue Friedensbewegung", 1979-1983' in Bernd Greiner, ed., *Angst im Kalten Krieg* (Hamburg: Hamburger Ed., 2009), 495-520; also: Petra Kelly, 'Acceptance Speech: The Right Livelihood Awards', available at www.rightlivelihood.org/kelly_speech.html (last visited June 2011); Harry Kreisler, 'Conversation with Petra Kelly and Gert Bastian: Conversations with History', Institute of International Studies, UC Berkeley, available at www.globetrotter.berkeley.edu/conversations/ KellyBastian/kelly-bastian4.html (last visited April 2011). On the Soviet fear of the N-bomb see: Nicholas Thompson, 'Nuclear War and Nuclear Fear in the 1970s and 1980s', *Journal of Contemporary History* 46, 1 (2011), 136-149, at 138.

[20] Václav Havel, 'Anatomy of Reticence,' in Paul Wilson, ed., *Open Letters: Selected Prose 1965-1990* (London: Faber and Faber, 1991), 291-322, at 310.

[21] Cf. Collective, 'The Berlin Appeal: Make Peace without Weapons', available at www.germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Chapter12Doc11Intro.pdf (last visited March 2011).

> [F]ive years ago, one important European country attacked a small neutral neighbour and since that time has been conducting on its territory a war of extermination which has already claimed a million dead and three million refugees […] Seriously, what are we to think of a peace movement, a European peace movement, which is virtually unaware of the only war being conducted today by a European state?[22]

In the east, peace movements eventually emerged from sources that were different than fear of 'the bomb'. They were the result of a growing anti-militarist sentiment, which found most visible expression in individuals refusing to perform military service and this later turned into an organized movement.[23] The focus here was, therefore, domestic at the beginning – and closer to human rights. While western movements such as END were giving voice to the idea of disarmament, eastern oppositionists were trying to reformulate the definition and the implications of peace. First, peace was seen not as a value in itself, but rather as the outcome of specific domestic and societal conditions – rule of law, democracy and the respect for human rights and civil freedoms. Later, this idea, known as *indivisible peace*, was justified by an opposition leader from the younger generation: 'the main threat to peace is not in arms, but in the division into irreconcilable political systems.'[24] As a consequence, this implied a fundamental revision of the political idea of peaceful coexistence and détente which had formed the basis for European disarmament movements.

1980-84: From Reticence to Dialogue

In the years 1980-1981, many observers and activists suggested that cooperation between the largest eastern European opposition movement – the Polish Solidarity trade union – and the emerging peace movements in the west would be natural; however, no such dialogue between them occurred.

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[22] Havel, 'Anatomy', 312.

[23] This in turn is linked to the cultural changes within the young generation of the 1980s, most visibly articulated in different forms of alternative culture, i.e. punk music. For Czechoslovakia, see: Miroslav Vaněk et al., *Ostrůvky svobody: Kulturní a občanské aktivity mladé generaced v 80. letech v Československu* (Prague: Ústav pro soudobé dějiny AV ČR, 2002); Miroslav Vaněk, *Byl to jenom rock'n'roll? Hudební alternativa v komunistickém Československu 1956-1989* (Praha: Academia, 2010). For Poland: Krzysztof Lesiakowski, Paweł Perzyna and Tomasz Toborek, *Jarocin w obiektywie bezpieki* (Warszawa: IPN, 2004). Anna Smółka-Gnauck, *Między wolnością a pokojem: Zarys historii Ruchu "Wolność i Pokój"* (Warszawa: IPN, 2012).

[24] Jacek Czaputowicz, 'Wolność i pokój są niepodzielne', *Czas Przyszły* [samizdat], Sept. (1987), 9-15.

There were several different reasons for this muteness. Garton Ash, not very enthusiastic about the western 'peaceniks', quotes one Solidarity member as suggesting that the westerners 'were afraid of what they might find'.[25] E. P. Thompson 'contended that END did attempt to make contact with Solidarity and tried to publish END's ideas in the Solidarity press, but received no encouragement from the Polish movement.'[26] There was, perhaps, not enough understanding on both sides and, when the peace movement acted too slowly after the introduction of the Martial Law, the missed opportunity was regretted. Garton Ash, moreover, showed that for Solidarity, abstaining from discussions of international affairs, foreign policy, or global peace was 'a precondition for any peaceful compromise with the communist regime'.[27]

Gillian Wylie provides a more detailed analysis of the reasons for Solidarity's reluctance to 'talk peace'.[28] These included the practical difficulties inherent in the east-west communication in the early 1980s as well as the aforementioned Solidarity focus on domestic issues. Another reason was the confusion around the meaning of the very word 'peace' as a mantra of communist propaganda.[29] Wylie also points to possible reasons on the part of the western left: the praise Solidarity received from western right-wing politicians or the trade union's perceived Catholic identity. But more importantly, many strands of the old and new left in Europe were not at all certain that a dialogue with independent groups in the east was necessary and desired. Other reasons that Wylie gives are rooted in the Poles' own attitudes. Thompson, for example, in his characteristic categorical manner claimed that Polish intellectuals and activists were suffering from the 'dulling of the Internationalist Nerve'.[30] Another obstacle for the western

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[25] Magda Wójcik quoted in: Garton Ash, 'Solidarity', 332-333.

[26] Gillian Wylie, 'Social Movements and International Change: The Case of "Détente from Below"', *International Journal for Peace Studies* 4, 2 (1999), available at www.gmu.edu/programs/icar/ijps/vol4_2/wylie.htm (last visited 1 April, 2011), quoting *END Journal* 8 (1984), 25.

[27] Garton Ash, 'Solidarity', 333. The only exception here was the 'Message to the Nations of Eastern Europe' issued by the Solidarity general assembly in August 1981. Its history and impact, although significant, especially in the USSR, remains relatively unknown and requires further research.

[28] Wylie, 'Social Movements'.

[29] Kacper Szulecki, 'Hijacked Ideas: Human Rights, Peace and Environmentalism in Czechoslovak and Polish Dissident Discourses', *East European Politics and Societies* 25, 2 (2011), 272-295, at 284.

[30] Wylie, 'Social Movements'. This accusation is repeated for example in: Ivan Slinkman, 'O niektórych osobliwościach dialogu Wschód-Zachód', *Vacat* [samizdat] 21 (1984), 12-23.

disarmament activists was that the Poles seemed to… oppose the idea of nuclear disarmament. And finally, early on, eastern opposition was firm in arguing that human rights should be prioritized over peace issues.

That was how the situation of mutual 'reticence' could be characterized in 1980, and these points may well be generalized to the whole of the central European dissident movement. When in 1980 E. P. Thompson visited Prague, Charter 77 representatives were reluctant to meet with him.[31] In this situation, the END Appeal was a very important step in setting the groundwork for dialogue. Firstly, unlike the older Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), the END no longer echoed the Soviet propaganda in arguing that the nuclear arms race was solely the fault of the USA. The Appeal proposed a 'balance of guilt' – a point that many eastern Europeans could agree on. Secondly, END demanded a bilateral disarmament, thus countering the accusation of being 'naïve' (the typical description of the peace movement from an independent eastern perspective).[32] Thirdly, the Appeal called for a 'Europe-wide campaign'. Leaving aside the technicalities, this marked a very important shift. END was interested in a pan-European dialogue of social movements and so was willing to engage the eastern independents as well.

To describe this, the authors of the END Appeal used an expression that seems to be borrowed from Havel's Power of the Powerless: 'we must commence to act *as if* a united, neutral and pacific Europe already exists.'[33] However, the points of contention remained clear. The END Appeal maintained that the limiting of civil liberties was the *consequence* of the arms race and militarization, not the *cause*, as the dissidents would see it. Additionally, it claimed that 'twice in this century Europe has disgraced its claims to civilization by engendering world war. This time we must repay our debts to the world by engendering peace.' To dissident intellectual ears this sounded like a declaration of utopian pacifism that not only openly

[31] Milan Hauner, 'Charter 77 and European Peace Movement', in Jiri Suk, Oldřich Tůma and Marketa Devata, eds., *Charter 77 : From the Assertion of Human Rights to a Democratic Revolution, 1977 - 1989: The Proceedings of the Conference to Mark the 30th Anniversary of Charter 77, Prague, 21-23 March 2007* (Praha: Ustav Pro Soudobe Dejiny AV ČR, 2007), 163-194.

[32] In fact, the END Appeal indicated the need for a bilateral disarmament and emphasized that the USSR ought to halt its armaments. However, on an applied level, probably because in 1981 any pressure on the Soviets seemed unrealistic, the actual actions of the END focused on disarmament in the NATO states. It seems that when the Appeal was published, that issue was not yet entirely resolved within the movement. The support for unilateral disarmament was an argument against the peace movement that eastern independents continued to put forth up until 1985-86.

[33] END, 'Appeal', 95-96. Cf. Havel, 'Anatomy'.

acclaimed what they saw as the fallacious 'peace at all costs' appeasement policies, but was also willing to defend the petrified Yalta division of Europe to prevent the dubious 'nuclear holocaust'.

The END Appeal was founded on a 'theory of the cold war' – sometimes referred to as *exterminism* – whose main author was E. P. Thompson, one of the founders and perhaps the most prominent intellectual leader of END.[34] The text emphasized the irrationality of the nuclear arms race and the approaching catastrophe, while downplaying the importance of other factors influencing peace, such as for the nature of domestic political systems. The threat of a nuclear war and the fear of annihilation were the driving forces of the peace movement and the reason for its mass appeal. As did the END Appeal, speaking of 'both halves of Europe', Thompson was also implicitly accepting the Yalta geopolitical spatialisation of the continent.

Whereas the Polish opposition, especially after December 1981, was preoccupied with their domestic crisis, in Czechoslovakia the dissident community quickly understood the need for addressing the peace movement,[35] seeing in it not only a potential ally, but also a potential foe if used by the communist propaganda. The first direct reference to the western peace movement was made by Charter 77 in 1981.[36] Addressing the question of peace, the Czechoslovak dissidents were nevertheless reluctant to resign from the language of human rights. Some months later the Chartists wrote: 'Although we grasp the particularity of the current threat […] we are bound not to leave the principal issue of human rights',[37] and they also referred to a 'human right to live in peace'.[38] Here the notion of *indivisible*

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[34] See: E. P. Thompson, 'Notes on Exterminism, the Last Stage of Civilization', *New Left Review,* I, 121 (1980); END, 'Appeal'. For a brilliant critical discussion of Thompson's oeuvre, coming from an author once involved in the disarmament movement, see: Baehr, 'Thompson'.

[35] In this realization they were perhaps helped by the politically active circle of émigré intellectuals gathered around the social-democratic, exilic periodical *Listy*, published in Rome by Jiří Pelikán. The latter and Zdeněk Mlynář, another key columnist of *Listy*, were up-to-date not only with the opposition activity in Czechoslovakia, but with the new currents in the western European left. The Polish equivalent of *Listy*, the London based *Aneks*, did not play such a role. Cf. Jiří Pelikán, 'Žít s raketami?', *Listý* 6, prosinec (1983), 1-4.

[36] Charta 77, 'O míru a mírovém hnutí' (16 Nov. 1981), in Vilém Prečan, ed., *Charta 77 1977-1989 – Od moralni k demokraticke revoluci. Dokumentace* (Scheinfeld, Praha and Bratislava: Archa, 1990), 234-235.

[37] Charta 77, 'O nedělitelnosti míru' 13/82 (29 Jan. 1982), in Prečan, *Charta* 77, 236-237, at 237.

[38] Charta 77, 'Poselství solidarity mírovému hnutí v NDR' 18/82 (21 Apr. 1982), in Prečan, *Charta* 77, 238.

peace appears for the first time in dissident discourse, along with a clear reference to the naïveté of pure pacifism.[39]

This is the first moment when the attempt at a *re-negotiation of the meaning of peace* becomes visible. At first, however, open letters and statements (such as those issued by Charter 77) were inherently monologues. It was only in an exchange of letters between a Czech intellectual, writing under the pseudonym Václav Racek,[40] and Thompson which symbolically initiated a dialogue.[41]

Racek's calm but devastating critique of Thompson's views was reprinted in the western press, as well as in exile journals and in samizdat. In his letter from 12 December 1980, Racek attacked Thompson's exterminist perspective, pointing out that the belief that Soviet armaments were 'of a defensive nature […] not aggressive and imperialist, but bureaucratic and

[39] The notion of *indivisible peace* comes from the Czechoslovak president Eduard Beneš at the time of the Munich Agreement. Although Paul Milyukov claims that the phrasing is of Soviet origin and was popularized by the British, it then had a different meaning. The one used after the second world war was the Czechoslovak understanding, which first reappeared in 1967 in the Manifesto of the Czechoslovak Writers Union, initiating the process of change that culminated in the Prague Spring. By then the concept had been disseminated in the west (the Manifesto was re-published in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Le Monde*, *Herald Tribune* and *The Sunday Times*), but its career began only after the Charter held it up. It gained enormous popularity in the 1980s east-west dialogue. In 1985, the Initiative for East-West Dialogue made it the title of their book on European peace movements in which it reprinted a text by the Polish KOS under the same title – 'Peace is indivisible'. See: Paul Milyukov, '"Indivisible Peace" and the Two Blocs in Europe', *The Slavonic and East European Review* 15, 45 (1937), 577-587; Hubert Ripka, 'Indivisible Peace', *The Slavonic and East European Review* 16, 46 (1937), 71-81; Svědectví, 'Manifest Československych spisovatelů aneb jaká je pravda', *Svědectví* 33, IX (1967), 6; Initiative Ost-West Dialog, *Der Frieden ist unteilbar: Für ein Europa jenseits der Blöcke* (Berlin: Oberbaum Verlag, 1985).

[40] Racek's real name is Miloslav Bednář. He is a philosopher and was never part of the Charter movement. The fact that Thompson chose to engage in public dialogue with Racek shows both his determination to persuade eastern independents, as well as the constitutive quality of the label 'dissident' from which Racek benefited. Would Thompson perhaps have ignored the letter had it come from a western philosopher? Perhaps he suspected that it was Havel or Benda hiding behind the pseudonym? This is just speculation, but within the dialogue over peace many new voices from central Europe are seriously considered by western intellectuals and audiences, up to a point in the second half of the decade when very young and relatively unknown oppositionists were invited to comment on both domestic and international affairs in major western newspapers, or to meet key western politicians upon their visits to central Europe. See: Kacper Szulecki, 'The Figure of the Dissident: How Oppositionists Become Celebrities', paper presented at the Forschungsstelle Osteuropa, Bremen, 23 Nov. 2010.

[41] Václav Racek, 'List do Edwarda Thompsona', *Aneks* 33 (1984), 35-39; also Hauner, 'Charter 77'.

ideological' was unacceptable[42] and that 'ascribing an exterminist doctrine to both military blocs […] is rooted in a dangerous naïveté, widespread in the west' which makes the current peace movement resemble the appeasement advocates of the 1930s.[43] He accused Thompson of having a 'poor political foundation' if he sincerely believed that mere easing of tensions between the two superpowers could enhance democratization (on *both* sides of the iron curtain, that is). Finally, Racek argued that 'every disarmament movement makes sense and is a source of hope only if it also advocates for human rights.'[44]

Whereas Thompson's direct reply to the letter is rather disappointing and polemic,[45] his perspective changed perceptibly as a result of Racek's persuasion. In a meeting with Hungarian intellectuals in a Budapest flat in 1982, his views were much closer to those voiced by Racek than his own from 1980.[46] Later, his article *END and the Soviet 'Peace Offensive'*, published in *The Nation* in 1983, showed another important modification of his standpoint. Thompson notes that the Soviet leaders might not have had aggressive aims, but their deterring nuclear policies were very useful in petrifying the status quo in Europe. He also pointed out that 'the Soviet peace offensive' was only made for export and was accompanied by a harsh internal 'cold war' at home.[47] As a commentator noted, 'Thompson did not always have an understanding for the life of the Europeans in the Soviet Bloc, this article therefore signals an important evolution in his views.'[48] The peace movement's key intellectual was gradually accepting the role of the Soviets in the arms race and, more importantly, the impact that it had

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[42] That 'bureaucratic nature' is a notion that Thompson seems to have taken from an exchange with the Medvedev brothers: E. P. Thompson, 'Exterminism Reviewed', in his, *The Heavy Dancers* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985), 135-152, at 139.

[43] All the time Racek is targeting Thompson's views as expressed in *Notes on Exterminism*. Perhaps in light of the END Appeal, his critique would be less harsh. Quoted in: Racek, 'List', 36-37.

[44] Racek, 'List', 38 and 37. Cf. Jacques Rupnik, 'Wojna i pokój: Wstęp', *Aneks* 33 (1984), 5.

[45] Cf. *New Statesman*, 24 Apr. 1981. Hauner writes politely that 'Thompson tried several ways to dispel Racek's fears … but to no avail'. Judt was much blunter, calling the reply a 'patronizing dismissal' which speaks of 'the Czech dissidents' "naïve" desire for liberty'. He goes on to say that according to Thompson 'the benighted dissidents … had a "more inverted and more partial view of the world" than Thompson and his like-minded western colleagues'. See: Hauner, 'Charter 77', 8; Tony Judt, 'The Case of E. P. Thompson', *The New York Review of Books,* 15 Feb. 2007.

[46] E. P. Thompson, '"Normalizacja" Europy', *Aneks* 33 (1984), 21-34.

[47] Quoted in: Slinkman, 'O osobliwościach', 18.

[48] Slinkman, 'O osobliwościach', 18.

on the domestic situation in the Warsaw Pact states. The initial re-negotiation of the meaning of peace was thus achieved – domestic issues were acknowledged by the END leaders as needing to be discussed in relation to peace issues; they were no longer separate. But they were not yet considered as causally linked in the way the dissidents proposed. For that shift, they had to wait until at least 1986.

In April 1983, Thompson was finally directly approached by a Chartist. The former socialist politician from Brno, Prague Spring veteran, and later Charter 77 spokesman and political prisoner Jaroslav Šabata, sent an open letter to the END leader in which he for the first time laid out his idea for a peaceful Europe.[49] It is important to note that while Thompson's diagnoses of the structural and psychological mechanisms behind the Cold War were inspiring (although debatable), END was by that time heavily criticized for its failure to provide 'either a credible foreign policy or defence alternative'.[50] What Šabata put forth was just such an alternative – a *heretical geopolitics* from eastern Europe. Its key point was the 'democratic transformation of Europe' – resulting from a coalition of western peace movements and eastern independent human rights movement – and eventually aiming at the unification of Europe.[51] This, according to Šabata, was only possible with a united Germany and the removal of foreign military troops from both western and eastern Europe. As Hauner points out, that was the first time that 'the hitherto taboo subject of German unification had appeared as a discussion item in the non-governmental East-West dialogue; and it was to stay there until the collapse of the Wall'.[52] The democratiza-

[49] See: Jaroslav Šabata, 'Letter to E. P. Thompson,' in Jan Kavan and Zdena Tomin, eds., *Voices from Prague: Documents on Czechoslovakia and the Peace Movement* (London: Palach Press Ltd., 1983), 52-70.; The idea of 'heretical geopolitics' is discussed in: Kacper Szulecki, 'Heretic Geopolitics in the Late Cold War Era: Jaroslav Šabata, The Prague Appeal and the "Future Tense" Circle against the Yaltan Division of Europe', paper presented at the workshop *Außenbeziehungen in kulturwissenschaftlicher Perspektive: Zum Zusammenhang von Nationsbildungsprozessen, Geschichtskonstruktionen und inter-/transnationalen Strategien in osteuropäischen Staaten*, 5-6 Apr. 2011, Konstanz.

[50] Baehr, 'Thompson'.

[51] Quoted and discussed in: E. P. Thompson, 'Dopis Edwarda Thompsona Jaroslavu Šabatovi o míru, mírovém hnutí a lidských právech', *Listy* XIV (1984), 26-31.

[52] Hauner, 'Charter 77', 10. The notion that the 'German Question' should be discussed by the peace treaty was raised soon after Šabata's letter to Thompson in May 1983 at the END Conference in Berlin. Šabata made note of that shift in a later text, however, his voice, coming from the east and from a nation with a traditionally anxious attitude towards Germany, was perhaps more significant. He wrote: 'What we should do on this matter is to take all national resentment by the horns by radicalising the "German" proposal made at the Berlin Convention.' See: Jaroslav Šabata, 'Which way forward in Europe', *East European Reporter* 1, 1 (1985), 24-27.

tion of Europe was presented by Šabata as the precondition for a stable 'democratic peace' on the continent – a liberal idea which Thompson (also a leftist) made a note of.[53] It might be said that with the insistence on human rights and democracy, and the idea of 'internal peace', the Moravian dissident was moving the debate beyond the *realist* paradigm of both cold war statesmen and their western peace-movement critics *and* proposing a *liberal* or 'idealist' perspective.

Thompson's reply, although seemingly enthusiastic ('I could not answer by anything other than: YES! [...] if your ideas were expressed as a prayer rather than a letter, I would add to them – Amen'),[54] was in fact an expression of important disagreement. Thompson was not happy with the suggested unification of Europe, which he perceived as the possible emergence of an 'all-encompassing Eurostate',[55] whereas he believed that 'distinct differences in socio-economic and political systems will remain [on both sides of Yalta].'[56] Nor was he excited, in his strikingly British way, about the unification of Germany or even a final settlement between the two Germanys, for which he saw the demilitarization of Europe as a *precondition*.[57] Šabata's concepts would, however, become an important element in the east-west dialogue ever after and were expressed in full form in the 1985 Prague Appeal.

Whereas Charter 77 continued to address the western peace movement with a series of other letters and appeals until 1984,[58] Poland's 'older' dissidents and Solidarity activists remained preoccupied with the underground union struggle (or serving their prison sentences). However, a milieu of 20-30 year olds, often 'veterans' of Student Solidarity Committees (SKS) and later the Independent Student Association (NZS), turned to

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[53] E. P. Thompson, 'Decaying Ideological Rubbish', in *Heavy Dancers*, 295-346, at 301.

[54] Thompson, 'Dopis', 26. Interestingly, the text of the letter that was republished in Thompson's collected works is very different from the Czech version and does not contain that last ironic comment, although it is much longer. Compare: E. P. Thompson, 'The Two Sides of Yalta', in *Heavy Dancers*, 169-182.

[55] Thompson, 'Dopis', 30.

[56] This passage, evidently sceptical about the unification and democratization of Europe, is also very different in the Czech version – luckily for Thompson's reception in Czechoslovakia perhaps. See: Thompson, 'Two Sides', 181.

[57] There is not enough space in this chapter to discuss the debate on geopolitical issues, the 'German Question' and the emergence of the discourse of central Europe. For a wider discussion refer to: Szulecki, 'Heretical Geopolitics'.

[58] Charter's interest in peace issues and its output during the years 1980-1983 was summed up in Jiří Hájek, 'Charta 77 a současné mírové hnutí', *Listy* 13, 4 (1983), 12-14; as well as Vilém Prečan, 'Charta 77, Její vztah k otázkám míru a k soudobým mírovým hnutím', *Listy* 14, 2 (1984), 14-22.

different topics and activities. Many such younger oppositionists became affiliated with the Societal Resistance Committee (KOS), an underground group from Warsaw, and its fortnightly samizdat periodical *KOS*. The KOS group was the only part of the post-Solidarity opposition to sign the END Appeal, and thus entered the transnational END network – although not without ideational restraints. In May 1983, the final days of the 'state of war' in Poland, KOS published a declaration entitled *Solidarity in Defence of Peace*. Using the widespread fame and reputation of Solidarity, the authors of the declaration advanced their theory on peace, polemically engaging the western peace movement: 'States controlled by totalitarian political systems are a threat to world peace' whereas 'the form of totalitarianism currently constituting the largest threat for peace is the totalitarian communist system.'[59] They declared that:

> The defence of peace cannot be separated from the defence against totalitarianism, from the struggle for freedom and democracy
> It cannot be separated from combating poverty. Poverty in the Third World enhances totalitarianism's expansion, while within totalitarian states it enables the control over societies.
> It cannot be separated from the fight for human and civil rights […].
> We continue our struggle against totalitarianism, and in that we see our input to the struggle for peace […].
> We declare our solidarity with all the people, nations and organizations for whom the defence of peace and life on Earth is the most important issue.[60]

In a way, the 1983 KOS declaration was the 1981 END Appeal *a rebours*, a negative image written from an eastern European perspective. As such, it was welcomed with a degree of warmth – after all, it was the first time legitimate heirs of Solidarity had made a clear statement about peace issues. On the other hand though, it showed how far apart the initial standpoints of the Polish opposition and END were – and that distance was clearly greater than between the westerners and Charter 77 or the Hungarian Dialogue group. Disarmament is not mentioned at all in the declaration, nor is any responsibility of NATO implied (on the contrary – it is denied as 'propagandist hysteria').

Together with the declaration, KOS sent a letter to 'the members of peace and anti-nuclear movements in west Europe', and it was an important supplement to the declaration. The Letter's introduction was very much in line with the END Appeal. We read that the KOS members have 'respect and understanding' for the protest against 'armament madness' – 'Like you,

[59] Komitet Oporu Społecznego (KOS), 'Solidarność w obronie pokoju – Deklaracja', 20 May 1983, AO IV/25.02.01, KARTA Archives, Warsaw.

[60] KOS, 'Solidarność w obronie pokoju – Deklaracja', 20 May 1983, AO IV/25.02.01.

we also say NO to the arms race.'[61] However, discrepancies in viewpoints were also present. Unilateral disarmament is said not to 'serve the cause of peace' and the authors point to the propagandist usage of the peace movement in eastern Europe. Apart from introducing facts and constructing a positive framework for dialogue, the authors attempt an interesting rhetorical manoeuvre. 'We treat your protest as the defence of an elementary human right – the right to life.' In this way, END and other peace movements were being *constructed as an offshoot of human rights movements* – a fact which at that point in time would probably have been surprising if not highly debatable for their members.

The Letter ends with a heartfelt promise of an east European peace movement, also discussed in an essay by Dawid Warszawski: *Pacifism – Traps and Hopes*.[62] Warszawski, whose work was disseminated in western Europe, stated that the western peace movement needed the eastern independents – because only a democratisation in the east could in fact bring about peace. But more importantly maybe, the eastern independents – the Polish opposition in particular – needed the peace movement, because it was an important part of western public opinion and its attention was vital to supporting the dissident's domestic struggles. Warszawski thus proposed the establishment of a non-violent *dissident peace movement* in the sense that it should act openly, seek recognition in western public opinion and mobilize the society.

From then on, the problems of peace and disarmament were discussed almost every two weeks in the *KOS* periodical and the replies of different peace and human rights organizations from Poland and abroad were published under the heading *A Dialogue in Defence of Peace*. This process would eventually lead to the establishment of the first quasi-movement in April 1984, the Ranks of Peace and Solidarity, a joint initiative of the KOS

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[61] Komitet Oporu Społecznego (KOS), 'List KOS: Do uczestników ruchów pokojowych i antynuklearnych w krajach Europy Zachodniej', *KOS* [samizdat] 32 (1983). Some months later, the Committee issued a statement on the deployment of nuclear warheads in Czechoslovakia and the GDR. Even though, due to 'the consistent fight of the Polish society with the regime', no new missiles would be stationed in Poland, KOS saw the 'additional growth of Soviet military supremacy in Europe' as a threat to the country's security. It thus called for the 'support for protest actions in both countries and the continuation, on both sides of the iron curtain, of the solidary struggle for a Europe free from nuclear weapons and all violence.' See: Komitet Oporu Społecznego, 'Oświadczenie Komitetu Oporu Społecznego w związku z zapowiedzią umieszczenia na terytorium Czechosłowacji i NRD sowieckich rakiet z głowicami atomowymi', 31 Oct. 1983, AO IV/25.02.02, KARTA Archives, Warsaw.

[62] Dawid Warszawski is the pen name of the journalist and political analyst Konstanty Gebert, which he uses until this day. Dawid Warszawski, 'Pacyfizm - pułapki i nadzieje,' *KOS* [samizdat] 32 (1983), 2-3.

and the radical Fighting Solidarity.[63] The reply from END that eventually arrived in late 1983 disappointed the Poles and confirmed all anti-pacifist prejudices instead of removing them. The Poles were accused of being unjust in their treatment of the USSR and were informed that unilateral disarmament of the west was a good way to break out of the vicious circle.[64] This single inconsiderate gesture can account for the prevailing hostility of the Polish independents towards END during the several years after the exchange.[65] In the second half of 1983, eastern European dissidents welcomed the news that Lech Wałęsa was to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. That fact helped in the rehabilitation of the word 'peace'.[66] Transnationally, Wałęsa's prize provided an additional boost to the argument for the inherent link between peace and human rights. One of the heroic dissident figures of that time – Zbigniew Bujak, a Solidarity leader who remained in hiding between 1981 and 1986 – stated that 'Wałęsa's Nobel Peace Prize is an indication that the fight for human rights is a path towards the erosion of the sources of war. And that is the path everyone fighting for peace ought to take.'[67]

1983 also saw the first public action on peace issues. The decision to deploy Soviet missiles in Czechoslovakia caused a large scale protest in circles and places previously not associated with oppositional activity. A young Charter 77 signatory from Brno, Petr Pospichal, organized a petition against the nuclear missiles, which was signed by over a thousand people – a very large number for Czechoslovak realities. Pospichal remained in close contact with the nestor of the Brno opposition scene, Jaroslav Šabata. The latter was already at that point aware that a peace movement was also needed in Czechoslovakia. Pospichal saw in the organizational experience of the 1983 petition both the roots of the movement that would appear in the second half of the decade as well as the popularity that the issue of peace and disarmament had among the younger generation of Czechs.[68]

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[63] Solidarność Walcząca, 'Zawiązało się "Ogniwo Szeregów Pokoju i Solidarności"', *KOS* [samizdat] 53 (1984), 2; it was noticed and welcomed by the western pacifists: END, 'Independent Peace Moves in Poland', *END Journal* 10 (1984), 8.

[64] KOS, 'List do KOS-a od pacyfistów angielskich', *KOS* [samizdat] 47 (1984), 5.

[65] As late as 1987 at the END Convention in Coventry Stanisław Puzyna, the Polish delegate, noted that 'the END movement is strongly anti-American and at the same time strongly linked to the USSR's foreign policy'. Stanisław Puzyna, '6. Konwencja ruchu Europejskiego Rozbrojenia Nukleranego: Coventry, 15-19 VII 1987', *Czas Przyszły* [samizdat] 1, Dec. (1987), 31-57.

[66] KOS, 'Nobel '83', *KOS* [samizdat] 47 (1984), 3.

[67] Zbigniew Bujak, 'Oświadczenie Zbyszka Bujaka: Warszawa, 7 X 1983', *KOS* [samizdat] 41 (1983), 1.

[68] Interview with P. Pospichal, *Čelákovice*, 18 May 2010.

For Poland, an essay published in 1984 by an American sympathizer of Solidarity – Ivan Slinkman (a pseudonym of the political scientist David Ost) – provided important input for the Polish opposition to rethink some of its arguments and explore the differences between the eastern and western standpoints. Slinkman bashed Polish oppositionists as Polono-centric, as lacking understanding for global issues and concerns and as prejudiced against the western left and the peace movement.[69] Dawid Warszawski, whom Slinkman pointed out as the most alert supporter of the initiated dialogue, tried to persuade the American that the situations in the east and the west were indeed incomparable, and so were the US and the USSR. In a sentence that has been echoed in other statements since, he declared that 'your point of departure, is our longed point of arrival',[70] namely, democracy. The exchange between the two intellectuals created a map of divergences, but provided the easterners with a repertoire of convincing arguments. The important point of the critique that remained was that the Polish opposition would be unable to engage in universal debates on peace, until it at least was able to produce an independent peace movement of its own.

1985: The Emergence of 'Freedom and Peace' and the Prague Appeal

In the spring of 1985, several groups of people in different places, it seems, arrived at very similar ideas. Building on the transnational exchange of ideas and reacting to the transnational conditions of the time, the Czechoslovak dissidents issued what was to be one of the most important documents in the history of east European dissent. For their part, Polish activists established a new movement – 'Freedom and Peace' (WiP), a self-described pacifist Polish organization – which would begin putting the ideas of that document into action and which became a reference point for similar initiatives in the entire eastern bloc.

Judging from the eastern European dissidents' texts and personal accounts of these east-west contacts, it seems that the processes (described above) leading to the events of 1985 had been quite instrumental from the start – a process I have described elsewhere as a form of discursive hijacking.[71] The peace movement was an ally helping to publicize the dissident

[69] Slinkman, 'O osobliwościach'.

[70] Dawid Warszawski, 'O niektórych osobliwościach myślenia postępowego' *Vacat* [samizdat] 21 (1984), 25-29. American statesmen understood this better. Compare: Richard T. Davies, 'Introduction into the Founding Declaration of the Freedom and Peace Movement', available at www.tezeusz.pl/cms/tz/index.php?id=2085 (last visited April 2011).

[71] Kacper Szulecki, 'Hijacked Ideas'.

cause. It was an external pressure group that was very much needed at that time. But to perform the role that the eastern independents foresaw for it, it had to be altered into a variant of a human rights advocacy network. Already in 1983, KOS and Warszawski wrote that there was a need for 'a Polish peace movement with which the western peace movement could – had to – establish a dialogue' because

> the Polish society desperately needs to keep the interest of public opinion in the west with "the Polish question" […] [for] by ignoring western public opinion we risk the loss of an asset that could in the future turn out to be priceless.[72]

The creation in 1985 of WiP was thus a conscious manoeuvre, at the same time creating a real partner to talk with western pacifists and providing a means to fight the communist propaganda at home.[73] In public declarations, this exchange was to be reciprocal. But in internal statements, it was far more instrumental. When the idea of a peace movement was first discussed, Maciej Kuroń – son of the famous dissident leader Jacek Kuroń – argued: 'we have to think how the western peace movement can help us here, and not how we can help the western peace movement.'[74] Some, especially the conservative affiliates of the newly formed peace group, suggested that in its strategy 'the slogans of peace should be articulated last'.[75] One of the leaders of the nascent movements, Jacek Czaputowicz, pointed out:

> The political slogan of the peace movements in the west is unconditional disarmament, the postulate of the reduction of armaments. The entire cunningness of such a movement in Poland could be […] to put forth identical claims. Our propaganda uses the peace movements for its own interest […] by siding with them, we bring back a kind of political balance.[76]

Domestically, apart from the propaganda issue, the establishment of WiP was also a move to mobilize new sections of the society. A former WiP activist admits that pacifism was chosen as an issue not only because of actual convictions, but also because 'pacifist ideas have, contrary to the

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[72] Warszawski, 'Pacyfizm'.

[73] Jacek Czaputowicz, interview with the author, Warsaw, 16 March 2010.

[74] Quoted in: Vacat, 'Społeczeństwo polskie a ruchy pokojowe: 19.03.1985', *Vacat* [samizdat] 32/33 (1985), 70. Jacek Kuroń was probably the only prominent dissident in Poland who understood the need for a peace initiative and paid attention to peace issues. Some argue that the idea to establish WiP was actually his, or at least a result of his strong influence. See: Rafał Kalukin, 'Sandwicze kontra ZOMO', *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 21 Aug. 2010.

[75] Konstanty Radziwiłł quoted in: Vacat, 'Społeczeństwo', 71.

[76] Vacat, 'Społeczeństwo', 71.

common opinion, a lot of potential, especially among the youth, but not only the youth.'[77] The establishment of WiP was a very important practical step in the east-west dialogue. But ideationally, more important impulses came almost at the same time from Czechoslovakia. On March 11, Charter 77 published the Prague Appeal, intended as an open letter to the Amsterdam convention.[78] The English translation appeared some weeks later in the first issue of the newly established *East European Reporter*. The exilic periodical soon became a multifunctional platform – integrating central European (Czechoslovak, Hungarian and Polish, as its editors)[79] dissent and providing western publics with reliable and fresh updates on the dissident's activities, publications etc. The Polish underground press reprinted a translation of the Appeal later that year – which is just one piece of evidence for the intensified circulation and communication that kicks-off in 1985.

The Prague Appeal made a coherent argument for the need to merge peace and human rights advocacy. In a non-confrontational manner, it introduced the notion of indivisible peace, as well as the distinction between *internal* and *external* peace – that only peace within countries (between governments and societies) can bring international peace. It also pointed to the Helsinki Accords and the CSCE as a pan-European Project which could secure peace in Europe in harmony with human rights and political freedoms and without the two antagonistic military blocs. Most famously it proposed the idea of *Helsinki from below* – the need for grassroot cooperation and the creation of links between independent civil initiatives, thus giving 'real life' to the Helsinki Accords.[80]

The Appeal gave a new direction to the activities of large parts of the eastern European opposition, but more importantly acted as a source of inspiration for the emerging east-west network and so, was the key docu-

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[77] Jan Żuro quoted in Padraic Kenney, *Wrocławskie zadymy* (Wrocław: ATUT, 2007), 141.

[78] Charta 77, 'Pražská výzva', *Informace o Charte* 8 (1985); Charta 77, 'The Prague Appeal', *East European Reporter* 1, 1 (1985), 27-28.

[79] Although the focus was on central Europe in the narrow sense of Milan Kundera's essay – Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland – the periodical's sponsors insisted that the title read 'East European Reporter'.

[80] The term 'Helsinki from below' appears in Czechoslovak literature (as well as Padraic Kenney's *A Carnival of Revolution: Central Europe 1989* [Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003]). The term was introduced to me by J. Šabata, while the western peace activists speak of a 'détente from below'. Seemingly, this is the same idea. There are just two nuances. Firstly, eastern dissidents were not very happy with the concept of détente and not willing to use the word. Additionally, the role of the Helsinki Accords is underlined in the expression 'Helsinki from below', a component which 'détente from below' did not have.

ment that effectively enabled the 'hijacking' of the peace movement by the dissidents. Why was it so important? It might seem that the ideas contained in it had already been articulated. The difference was in the non-confrontational tone of the document, as well as in the authority that its authors had due to a lasting dialogue with the western peace movement. Šabata's vision, which was recognized by Thompson after their exchange of letters in 1983-84, definitely played a role. But so did Havel's reputation and the general dissident 'magic' of Charter 77. What is more, the document's strident argument made it appealing and last but not least, it was published at exactly the right time.

Yet there was one more factor. The Appeal also had a peculiar 'appendix'. In May 1985, Havel published the famous essay *Anatomy of Reticence*, also addressed to the Amsterdam Convention.[81] The essay explained the nuances of the east-west relations, the misunderstandings on peace issues, the problems that eastern European dissidents encountered and sketched the perspectives for joint actions. In a genre characteristic for Havel, an essay, which in fact introduces a character (the eastern peace activist) who becomes a protagonist of a seductive drama, the Czech writer was able to reach a level of understanding with the western audiences that no manifesto or appeal could ever match: 'and now try to imagine, my dear western peace activist that you confront this half-exhausted citizen with the question of what he is willing to do for world peace.'[82] However, Havel was not just being nice and sympathetic. On the contrary, *Anatomy* is underpinned with a certain regret and accusation that the Prague Appeal is free of. Havel mocks the western peace movement's own reticence towards the eastern independents:

> When it comes to the 'dissidents' in Eastern Europe, the prevailing mood seems to be one of reticence, of caution, if not of outright distrust and uneasiness. […] Absorbed in their provincial concerns, exaggerating human rights (as if human survival were not more important!) […] for [the peace movement] the dissidents tend to appear as a fifth column of western establishments east of the Yalta line.[83]

All this is not meant as scorning the 'naïve Westerners', rather a therapeutic exercise to create mutual trust: 'I think that a mutual exchange of such hard truths, with no punches pulled, is the first precondition for any meaningful European rapprochement.'[84]

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[81] Havel, 'Anatomy'.

[82] Ibid., 299.

[83] Ibid., 291-292.

[84] Ibid., 296.

In sum, what Havel did was to take the ideas of the Prague Appeal and explain them, illustrate them and play them out in a flamboyant 30 page essay that is both witty and inspiring. All this had an impact on the END process as well. WiP also sent a letter to the Convention, introducing themselves and stating similar points to the Prague Appeal by which they were apparently inspired.[85] However, unlike KOS and despite its clear orientation on peace, the new Polish movement was not willing to sign the END Appeal, which due to its anti-nuclear focus seemed fairly uninteresting. A new agenda was already emerging.

1986-1989: Giving Real Life to the Helsinki Accords

Even before 1985 a genuine interest in east-west independent contacts had begun to emerge within the western peace movement. Around 1983 in Germany, the idea of 'individual peace treaties' between the GDR and the FRG (and West Berlin) was born. The notion of changing the level and scope of contacts and finding new channels for the relaxation of cold war tensions would eventually be termed *détente from below*. The 3rd END Convention in Perugia marks a shift after which the idea of east-west cooperation gains priority or at least starts to live a life of its own in the institutional form of the Initiative for East-West Dialogue (founded back in 1983). At Perugia, a controversial protest performance by some activists emphasizing the need to collaborate with independent groups in authoritarian states caused a major dispute among the conference participants and fuelled the on-going debate that had divided END since its inception: should there be cooperation with the official peace clubs in the east and what was then to be the status of contacts with the independents.[86] The perspective after Perugia noticeably changed such that the 1985 END Convention in Amsterdam was dominated by eastern European issues. [87]

Different western European organizations independently and through the Initiative for East-West Dialogue led by Dieter Esche began to intensify the contacts with dissidents. The Dutch IKV was the first to establish strong links in eastern Europe, especially in Poland. The reasons here were perhaps pragmatic and ideational. One was that a Dutchman of Polish descent Jan Minkiewicz, who was the Solidarity, KOS and later WiP contact per-

[85] Jacek Czaputowicz, interview with the author, Warsaw, 16 March 2010.

[86] Patrick Burke, 'A Transcontinental Movement of Citizens? Strategic Debates in the 1980s Western Peace Movement', in Gerd-Rainer Horn and Padraic Kenney, eds., *Transnational Moments of Change* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2004), 189-206, at 189.

[87] Igor Lewy, 'Nie tylko pokój', *Vacat* [samizdat] 34, Sept.-Oct. (1985), 75-78.

son, lived in Amsterdam.[88] The other was that as a Christian organization, the IKV was received with somewhat less reticence than 'leftist pacifists'. It was also not anonymous – contrary to other strands of the peace movement, it actively sought contacts already earlier, with the Solidarity, and kept in touch with the Cracow based liberal Catholic group formed around the *Znak* monthly.[89] But even they were at first kept at arm's length. This was visible when Faber and Wolfgang Müller, another IKV leader, visited Warsaw in April 1985.[90]

After meeting veteran opposition figures Wałęsa, Janusz Onyszkiewicz and Kuroń, Faber was interviewed by Czaputowicz for the samizdat periodical *Vacat*, and the conversation was a rite-of-passage and a peculiar test for the Dutch activist in which he needed to challenge the prejudices of the Polish oppositionists towards the peace movement.[91] He was asked specifically if IKV maintained contacts with the official peace groups in the east, if he saw Solidarity as a potential partner for the peace movement, and what he could say about the accusations that the peace movement was financed by Moscow. Face-to-face contacts helped break the ice. Faber passed the test, and, as was already mentioned, the IKV provided a link between the nascent Polish initiative and END. Another link was made up of the contacts previously established by the KOS group, which (among others) included a partnership with the French peace group CODENE.

There was a growing feeling that the disarmament focus and language of the 1980 END Appeal was becoming out-dated. Based on that feeling, the European Network for East-West Dialogue began work on a new document. The Prague Appeal's suggestion that the Helsinki process was something that should be used by the independent groups on both sides of the iron curtain rather than be discarded, served as a departure point for what was initially called *Giving Real Life to the Helsinki Accords: A Memoran-*

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[88] Kenney writes that Minkiewicz urged Kuroń in a letter in 1984 to take a fresh, unbiased look at the western peace movements and soon after that (Spring 1985) he received phone calls from the younger Warsaw oppositionists – one of them was Czaputowicz – asking if he would consider representing WiP. Kenney, *Carnival*, 96; on the role of 'dissident interpreters' like Minkiewicz, Kavan and the Smolar brothers, see: Szulecki, 'Hijacked Ideas', 282.

[89] Ben ter Veer, Mient Jan Faber and Jan ter Laak, 'List otwarty do Jacka Kuronia: Styczeń 1985', *Vacat* [samizdat] 32/33 (1985), 65.

[90] Christie Miedema, 'The Transnationality of Dutch Solidarity with the Polish Opposition 1980-1989', *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire / Belgisch Tijdschrift voor Filologie en Geschiedenis* 89 (2011), 1307-1330.

[91] Mient Jan Faber, 'Nie jesteśmy za jednostronnym rozbrojeniem' *Vacat* 27, IV (1985), 38-41.

dum to European Peoples and Governments.[92] It is interesting to compare an early, western-initiated version of the *Memorandum* with its final, eastern-influenced version.

In an early sketch of the *Memorandum*, the authors proposed a structure which emulated that of the Helsinki Accords[93] in which *Human Rights and the Self-determination of Peoples* (III Basket) come last.[94] Each part discussed different specific topics. A link was also made to the END Appeal and the draft indeed looked like an update of that document. Disarmament issues for example, played an important role and were discussed in minute detail. On the other hand, human rights concerns appeared only on page 27 of the 40 page draft. The authors also believed that although independent groups in the east were a natural partner for the peace movement, this 'should not exclude contacts with official eastern peace councils'.[95]

The final version of the *Memorandum*, prepared on the eve of the Vienna CSCE Summit in April 1986, was the result of an intensive transnational creative process at a previously unknown scale. Dozens of groups and hundreds of individuals took part in both 'halves of Europe'. In Czechoslovakia it was naturally Charter 77 (which was more isolated) and although sending comments on the first draft quite late, they were too significant to be ignored. In Poland it was WiP, KOS and the Polish Helsinki Committee (the latter, clearly a human rights organisation).

Comparing the early draft with the final published version shows the importance of the eastern European input as well as the shift that a part of the western peace movement's political elite made – away from just the disarmament postulates of the END Appeal and towards peace issues understood broadly and with a strong link to human rights and freedom. The Prague Appeal is openly acknowledged as an 'important stimulus' in the *Preface*.[96] 'We oppose any tendency to play off peace against freedom' – so the cover states. The structure of the text is completely altered with the idea of *détente from below* introduced early on, while the section on

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[92] Śliwa suggests that the Prague Appeal was 'the immediate driving force' that led to the works on the *Memorandum*. See: Śliwa, 'Ruch', 30.

[93] The authors listed are: Dieter Esche, Georg Breuer (Ind. Peace Initiative), Sylvie Mantrand (CODENE), Christian Semler (Initiative Ost-West-Dialog), Wim Bartels and Wolfgang Müller (both IKV) as well as Jan Minkiewicz (then already WiP spokesman).

[94] European Network for East-West Dialogue, *Giving Real Life to the Helsinki Accords (Draft): A Memorandum to the European Peoples and Governments* (Berlin 1985). I thank Padraic Kenney for sharing this document.

[95] *Ibid.*, 38.

[96] European Network for East-West Dialogue, *Giving Real Life to the Helsinki Accords: A Memorandum Drawn Up in Common by Independent Groups and Individuals in Eastern and Western Europe* (Berlin: European Network for East-West Dialogue, 1986), 3.

human rights proper follows security, but precedes economy (breaking with the original Helsinki Accords setup). The *Memorandum*, although it failed to visibly influence the inter-governmental CSCE process before 1990, began 'a firm shift in the optics of western European and American peace movements towards cooperation with eastern Europe and human rights advocacy'.[97]

Face to face contacts across the bloc divide were becoming more frequent, enhancing the exchange of ideas and enabling further exchanges regarding the divergent standpoints on peace issues. Western peace activists were travelling to the east and meeting their counterparts. CODENE members met WiP affiliates in November 1985, and the German 'Greens' debated with the Polish activists and issued a joint statement as a result.[98] Simultaneously, although travelling to the west was still very difficult for the Poles and almost impossible for the Czechs and Slovaks, interesting tours were taking place. Czaputowicz travelled to the west in the autumn of 1985, but it was the then 23-year-old student from Warsaw and WiP activist Piotr Niemczyk who managed to establish important new contacts and break some remaining ice. Kenney writes:

> Minkiewicz showed Niemczyk around the Dutch social movement scene, where Niemczyk made a great impression. He looked like one of them in his military castoff-style clothes and high leather punk boots. Niemczyk was arrested shortly after his return home, as was Czaputowicz. Both were charged, among other things, with harming Poland through their contacts with western peace organizations. This was for them a sign that they had struck a raw nerve, and it was one they would continue to probe throughout WiP's existence.[99]

Czaputowicz and Niemczyk's imprisonment, instead of taming the new movement and muting the transnational dialogue, seemed to invigorate it further. In their story and their 'cause', freedom and peace were blended in a tangible way. They were peace activists from eastern Europe who were imprisoned for their struggle – a fact that called for solidarity, and so, human rights advocacy on behalf of the 'disarmament' END and other movements.

Although contacts and exchanges were getting more intense, for reticence to give way to trust and understanding their scale had to be amplified. The first opportunity arose in 1987 when the WiP's Warsaw activists

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[97] Śliwa, 'Ruch', 31. Cf. Jacek Czaputowicz, 'Wyjście z zaścianka', *KOS* [samizdat] 104 (1986), 4.

[98] WiP / Die Grünen, 'The Common Declaration of the Freedom and Peace Movement and die Gruenen from West Germany,' available at www.tezeusz.pl/cms/tz/index.php?id=2088 (last visited Sept. 2011).

[99] Kenney, *Carnival,* 96.

proposed the organization of an east-west peace seminar – this time in Poland. The idea, seen as too radical and received coldly by much of the Solidarity leadership, was nevertheless acted upon, and between 7 and 10 May 1987, some sixty foreign activists met over two hundred Polish oppositionists to discuss peace, human rights and environmental issues under the general heading *International Peace and the Helsinki Accords*. The seminar was a ground-breaking event in the history of the eastern European opposition and its transnational contacts.[100]

The idea of an international conference held in eastern Europe was then replicated in Budapest (November 1987), Moscow (December 1987), Kraków (August 1988 – with over a thousand participants) and two disrupted seminars in Prague (1988). They were attended by many leading figures of the western peace movement – Joanne Landy chaired the Warsaw panel *Peace has a Name – Giving New Life to the Helsinki Accords*; Mary Kaldor helped organize semi-clandestine meetings in Prague,[101] where there were representatives of END, IKV, the German 'Greens' and many others. Śliwa summed up the 1987 Warsaw seminar:

> It was the largest direct encounter between the Polish opposition and the representatives of European and American social and political movements ever. At the time, it was seen as a change in the course of the western European left, and a significant shake up in its good relations with the eastern officials. Perhaps that is overstated, but it is clear that after the Warsaw meeting and at the following END conventions in Coventry and Lund, the eastern European vision of peace understood through the prism of human rights – was dominant.[102]

[100] Also indirect contacts such as exchanges of letters intensified and were regarded with attention on both sides of the iron curtain. A good example is the interview Joanne Landy gave to a WiP periodical in 1987, which spawned polemics from both Orłoś and Niemczyk and a reply from Landy. The exchange was published both in the Polish underground press and the *Peace Magazine*. Thanks to the *East European Reporter*, *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe*, *La Nouvelle Alternative* and even *Newsweek*, such exchanges were becoming more frequent and dynamic towards the end of the decade. See: Kazimierz Orłoś, Piotr Niemczyk and Joanne Landy, 'Poles Apart: Letters from Warsaw and New York City,' *Peace Magazine* 4, 1 (1988); Joanne Landy, 'Odpowiedź na list P. Niemczyka wraz z uwagami o tekście K. Orłosia,' *Czas Przyszły [samizdat],* Sept. (1987), 62-67.

[101] Joanne Landy, 'Worth Every Disrupted Minute: Interview', *East European Reporter* 3, 3 (1988), 22-24.

[102] Śliwa, 'Ruch', 32.

Conclusion: Did the dissidents change the peace movement?

The shift towards cooperation with eastern European independent groups and towards human rights, downplaying nuclear disarmament, was not welcomed unanimously. The Perugia and Amsterdam END Conventions rather marked an internal fissure within the already very diverse peace coalition. The Helsinki memorandum of 1986 was received with reserve in some circles due to its clear option for human rights and 'détente from below'. As a peculiar example, a German END group accused the authors of being 'western-centric' because of the emphasis they put on human rights in eastern Europe.[103] The older END activists were opposing the east-west independent collaboration, especially to the extent that it was precluding simultaneous collaboration with the official peace clubs. But the two détentes, from above and from below, were mutually exclusive for the dissidents.

In its last, rather desperate attempt to regain control over the peace network, the END Liaison Committee organizing the 1988 Lund Convention sent out invitations to [...] the Communist parties from all east European countries except Poland and Czechoslovakia. Hungarian, Yugoslav and East German independent peace groups boycotted the event, while almost all dissident groups made bitter remarks in letters and statements. It also caused an outcry in END's own ranks. Landy wrote that 'many delegates were distressed by the lack of prominence given to East-bloc independents at the [...] Convention, and the failure of Convention organizers to press East-bloc governments to allow independents to come to England.'[104] Eighty-two activists, including Faber, Landy, Kaldor, Petra Kelly and E. P. Thompson signed a letter expressing both opposition to the Liaison Committee's policy and solidarity with the eastern independents.

Finally, the main organizers of the 1988 Lund Convention declared that it would promote 'civil détente' rather than continue down the path of the Liaison Committee.[105] Kuroń and the Solidarity spokesman Janusz Onyszkiewicz, who for unknown reasons were granted passports and could attend the Lund meeting, 'had a major impact on the tenor of the convention' by

[103] END German-German Working Group, 'A Response to the Document "Giving Real Life to the Helsinki Accords"', *Bulletin of the European Network for East-West Dialogue* Trial September (1987), 16-18. The group also suggested that nuclear armament is the cause of human rights abuse, both in eastern and western Europe.

[104] Joanne Landy, 'To defend END's non-alignment, we must oppose admission of the Hungarian peace council to the Liaison Committee', *Bulletin of the European Network for East-West Dialogue* Trial, September (1987).

[105] Swedish Peace and Arbitration Society, 'Storm over the Peace Movement,' *Bulletin of the European Network for East-West Dialogue* Trial, September (1987), 53-54.

'discussing developments in the eastern bloc from the perspective of democratic activism'; they also repeatedly expressed their satisfaction at the degree to which the peace movement had internalized the notion of 'indivisible peace'.[106]

On the whole, by 1988 the European 'disarmament' movement became much more interested in human rights and détente from below than mere nuclear disarmament – and the role of ideas and activities of the eastern European dissident groups is clear (especially Charter 77 and WiP, but also the East German pacifists, Hungarian Dialogue, the Slovenian Peace Movement Working Group, as well as the younger Czechoslovak dissenters from Independent Peace Association (NMS), the Jazz Section and the John Lennon Peace Club). This is a somewhat forgotten heritage of central European dissent, rooted in the lived experience of authoritarianism, as well as evidence of the dissidents' transnational impact. The dialogue ended quite abruptly after 1989 when former dissidents took up positions of power within their states and once they had a chance of doing politics 'from above', there was little enthusiasm anymore for 'Helsinki from below'.

[106] Landy, 'Every Minute', 24.

HOLGER NEHRING

THE POLITICS OF SECURITY ACROSS THE 'IRON CURTAIN'

PEACE MOVEMENTS IN EAST AND WEST GERMANY IN THE 1980S

This chapter analyses the peace movements in both parts of Germany during the 1980s from a perspective that transcends the ideological and geopolitical divides of the cold war. In particular, it explores what the debates over the peace movements might tell us about the security relationships within NATO and the Warsaw Pact. In so doing, this chapter wants to get us to think about the ways in which conceptualising these movements beyond the divisions that the cold war created – the divisions into a *free* western Europe and an eastern Europe whose elites claimed to be in the process of realising a socialist *peace* – might enable us to gain novel insights into the transition that occurred in 1989.

I am interested in highlighting how the protests in both German polities responded to the same historical conjuncture:[1] the domestic political and social consequences that arose from the modernisation of nuclear weapons from the mid-1970s into the 1980s. Through this optic, this chapter seeks to investigate the conditions of possibility for the non-violence of the 1989 revolutions in both east and west.[2]

The political conditions in both parts of the country differed fundamentally from each other. While protesters in the Federal Republic were, in general, able to enjoy the freedom to express their views in the context of a pluralist liberal democracy, their counterparts in the GDR faced severe

[1] Cf. the conceptual suggestions by Christoph Kleßmann, 'Verflechtung und Abgrenzung: Aspekte der geteilten und zusammengehörigen deutschen Nachkriegsgeschichte', *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* 29-30 (1993), 30-41; and Martin Sabrow, 'Confrontation and Co-operation: Relations between the Two German Historio-graphies', in Christoph Kleßmann, ed., *The Divided Past: Rewriting Post-War German History* (Oxford: Berg, 2001), 128.

[2] See the landmark contribution by Martin Sabrow, ed., *1989 und die Rolle der Gewalt* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2012).

and significant personal and political costs for their actions. Nevertheless, what is striking about the protests is the extent to which they were linked and connected, not only in terms of the themes they addressed and the exchange of ideas and concepts across the 'iron curtain', but also in the ways in which governments perceived them as mirror images in the cold war for ideas. Whereas the peace movements appeared as the results of communist infiltration in the west, the GDR government interpreted the independent peace movement in the east as a consequence of an infiltration of the country by 'dangerous bourgeois-capitalist pacifists'.

The historiography on the end of the cold war has so far focused primarily either on the role of the two superpowers or on the direct impact of social movements and pressure groups on political processes. The most interesting scholarship has highlighted the importance of transnational actors in influencing Gorbachev's policies and the input of human rights activism following the Conference on Security and Co-operation (CSCE) from the mid-1970s onwards.[3] Historians have, however, rarely discussed two-way influences, and they have often concentrated on high politics rather than on what might be termed the micro-politics of the cold war, in other words the set of assumptions, political rules and processes that undergirded diplomacy and governmental decision making on a societal level. Or they have written the organisational histories of peace groups in the GDR.[4]

The body of historical research that has engaged with peace movements, in particular Jeffrey Herf's pathbreaking study *War by other Means*, has emphasised the West German peace movement's links with the communist

[3] Matthew Evangelista, *Unarmed Forces: The Transnational Movement to End the Cold War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999); Thomas Risse-Kappen, 'Did Peace through Strength End the Cold War?', *International Security* 16, 1 (1991), 162-188; Daniel C. Thomas, *The Helsinki Effect: International Norms, Human Rights, and the Demise of Communism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001). See also the more recent work by Helmut Altrichter and Hermann Wentker, eds., *Der KSZE-Prozess: Vom Kalten Krieg zu einem neuen Europa 1975 bis 1990* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2011); Anja Hanisch, *Die DDR im KSZE-Prozess 1972-1985*: *Zwischen Ostabhängigkeit, Westabgrenzung und Ausreisebewegung* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2012); Sarah B. Snyder, *Human Rights Activism and the End of the Cold War: A Transnational History of the Helsinki Network* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

[4] Thomas Klein, "*Frieden und Gerechtigkeit!": Die Politisierung der Unabhängigen Friedensbewegung in Ost-Berlin während der 80er Jahre* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2007); Maria Nooke, *Für Umweltverantwortung und Demokratisierung: Die Forster Oppositionsgruppe in der Auseinandersetzung mit Staat und Kirche* (Berlin: Ch. Links, 2008) and Marianne Subklew-Jeutner, *Der Pankower Friedenskreis: Geschichte einer oppositionellen Gruppe innerhalb der evangelischen Kirchen in der DDR 1981-1984* (Osnabrück: Der Andere Verlag, 2004); Matthias Kluge, *Das Christliche Friedensseminar Königswalde bei Werdau: Ein Beitrag zu den Ursprüngen der ostdeutschen Friedensbewegung in Sachsen* (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2004).

regimes in East Berlin and Moscow, has sought to negate peace and disarmament activists as autonomous actors, and has insisted that the sponsorship of peace movement activism, if not the peace activism itself, was a function of ideological cold warfare.[5] As Benjamin Ziemann has argued forcefully, peace historians have, by contrast, tended to exaggerate peace protesters' direct influence on political decision-making as well as their effectiveness in shaping and directing public opinion more generally.[6] Only more recently have historians begun to analyse the debates about peace and security in the 1980s from a more holistic perspective, although they have only rarely paid attention to the connective history of the campaigns.[7] Likewise, the history of the East German peace movement has been written mostly from the perspective of German unification in 1989-90. Many former activists have chosen to re-interpret their campaigns as civil-rights, rather than peace activism. And many historians have read the history of the civil-rights movement of 1989-90 backwards in order to show its importance, or ignored it altogether in order to highlight the totalitarian character of the GDR.[8]

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[5] Jeffrey Herf, *War By Other Means: Soviet Power, West German Resistance and the Battle of the Euromissiles* (New York: Free Press, 1991); Jürgen Maruhn and Manfred Wilke, eds., *Die verführte Friedensbewegung: Der Einfluss des Ostens auf die Nachrüstungsdebatte* (Munich: Olzog, 2001); Matthias Ploetz and Hans-Peter Müller, *Ferngelenkte Friedensbewegung? DDR und UdSSR im Kampf gegen den NATO-Doppelbeschluss* (Münster: Lit, 2004). As a critique see Holger Nehring and Benjamin Ziemann, 'Do All Paths Lead to Moscow? The NATO Dual-track Decision and the Peace Movement – a Critique', *Cold War History* 12, 1 (2012), 1-24.

[6] See on this: Benjamin Ziemann, 'Situating Peace Movements in the Political Culture of the Cold War.' Introduction, in idem, ed., *Peace Movements in Western Europe, Japan and the USA during the Cold War* (Essen: Klartext, 2008), 11-38, at 17, cf. my review of the work of Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle against the Bomb*, 3 vols (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993-2003), www.hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/rezensionen/2004-3-007 (last visited 3 Jan. 2012).

[7] See Christoph Becker-Schaum, et al., eds., *"Entrüstet Euch!" Nuklearkrise, NATO-Doppelbeschluss und Friedensbewegung* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2012); Eckart Conze, 'Modernitätsskepsis und die Utopie der Sicherheit: NATO-Nachrüstung und Friedensbewegung in der Geschichte der Bundesrepublik', *Zeithistorische Forschungen / Studies in Contemporary History*, online edition 7, 2 (2010), available at www. zeithistorische-forschungen.de/16126041-Conze-2-2010ZHF (last visited 3 Jan. 2012); Philipp Gassert et al., eds., *Zweiter Kalter Krieg und Friedensbewegung*: *Der NATO-Doppelbeschluss in deutsch-deutscher und internationaler Perspektive* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2011); Kacper Szulecki, 'Hijacked Ideas: Human Rights, Peace and Environmentalism in Czechoslovak and Polish Dissident Discourses', *East European Politics and Societies* 25, 2 (2011), 272-295.

[8] See the review article by Gerd Dietrich, 'Literaturbericht: Opposition, Widerstand und Bürgerbewegung in der DDR', *H-Soz-Kult*, available at www.hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/rezensionen/type=rezbuecher&id=1764 (last visited 1 June 2011) as well as Ilko-Sascha Kowalczuk, *Endspiel: Die Revolution von 1989 in der DDR* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2009).

Parallel Histories of Peace Activism

Protests against nuclear weapons reappeared in West German politics in the mid-to-late-1970s in the context of discussions over the deployment of medium-range and cruise missiles as well as novel 'neutron bomb' weapons. Various organisations mobilised thousands of supporters, while the Social Democratic (SPD) and Free Democratic (FDP) coalition government discussed the deployment in the context of mainstream politics. The protests culminated in large nationwide demonstrations before, during and after the NATO summit in Bonn. On 22 October 1983, 300,000 activists protested in Bonn, 350,000 in Hamburg and 100,000 in West Berlin. Thousands of protesters formed a 108 km-long human chain on roads between the US forces European Command in Stuttgart and the city of Ulm on the Baden-Württemberg / Bavarian border. Although rarely acknowledged in the literature, the West German protests continued after the deployment of the Pershing and cruise missiles in the winter of 1983-84, albeit on a smaller scale. Peace camps and blockades, still bringing together significant numbers of activists, continued in West Germany from the mid-1980s to the late 1980s, albeit less visibly on a national level. Moreover, many activists gave their protests new forms by campaigning within party and trade union organisations.

In the GDR, independent peace groups first emerged in the context of the debates about the churches' attitudes towards conscription and the GDR government's more accommodating policies towards religion from the 1970s onwards.[9] From the late 1970s and early 1980s, galvanised by the growing fears about the arms race and the Socialist Unity Party's (SED) hard-line stance on domestic politics, the peace groups began to form a movement that came to be linked through a number of GDR-wide 'peace workshops' and 'peace decades' (*Friedensdekaden*) that sought to capitalise on official peace campaigns by highlighting fears about nuclear weapons within new political environments. Most prominent amongst these were the campaigns 'Swords into Ploughshares' from 1980 onwards as we all as the 'Berlin Appeal: Create Peace without Weapons' in 1982. After 1983, the Protestant church held peace seminars that harkened back to smaller scale localised events organised by former *Bausoldaten* in the mid-1970s. *Bausoldaten* (literally 'construction soldiers') were those who had refused on ethical grounds to serve in the army with weapons and were instead placed in units concerned with the building of military infrastructure.

[9] An excellent overview of these groups is provided by Ehrhart Neubert, *Geschichte der Opposition in der DDR 1949-1989* (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 1997), 366-418.

Bausoldaten were unique to the GDR and did not exist in other eastern European countries. The arrangement initially emerged out of a practical problem and was never really formally advertised by the GDR government.[10]

The first group to leave the fold and protection of the Protestant church entirely and organise independently was the 'Initiative for Peace and Human Rights' (IFM), founded in Berlin in 1985.[11] All these campaigns were supported by an increasingly lively movement across the GDR and a growing samizdat press, such as IFM's journal *Grenzfall* and the *Umweltblätter*. The latter was published by the *Berliner Umweltbibliothek* ('Berlin Environmental Library'), which had been founded in the wake of the Chernobyl catastrophe in 1986, and it sought to connect the issues of environmental and peace protests.[12] Although rarely explicitly acknowledged in the historiography, networks of activists around these groups and journals continued to campaign well into 1989 under the heading of peace *and* civil rights. This was true for the protests against the manipulation of the May 1989 elections in the GDR and continued into the autumn of 1989.[13]

From the mid-1970s onwards, peace activism in East and West Germany was closely connected through the international context in which it emerged. It was not only the result of NATO's decision in 1979 to request the removal of a new generation of Soviet SS-20 medium-range missiles from Europe and, if this did not happen, to threaten the deployment of intermediate range missiles. It also accompanied growing tensions in world politics: the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in 1979, the declaration of martial law in Poland in winter 1981 in order to crush the emerging opposition around the independent trade union Solidarność, as well as the US interventions in Honduras and Guatemala. Fundamentally, the debate had its origins in the modernisation of nuclear weapons technologies beginning in the late 1960s and the implications this had for the US security guarantee for western Europe. At the time, negotiations between the Soviet Union

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[10] Bernd Eisenfeld and Peter Schicketanz, *Bausoldaten in der DDR: Die Zusammenführung feindlich-negativer Kräfte in der NVA* (Berlin: Ch. Links, 2011), chs. 3.2, 3.3 and 5.4.

[11] See the overview in Konrad H. Jarausch, *The Rush to German Unity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 33-44.

[12] Ilko-Sascha Kowalczuk, ed., *Freiheit und Öffentlichkeit: Politischer Samisdat in der DDR: Eine Dokumentation* (Berlin: Robert Havemann Gesellschaft, 2002); Melanie Arndt, *Tschernobyl: Auswirkungen des Reaktorunfalls auf die Bundesrepublik und die DDR* (Erfurt: Landeszentrale für politische Bildung Thüringen, 2011).

[13] See, for example, 'Die Opposition der DDR geht an den Start', *die tageszeitung (taz)*, 15 Aug. 1989.

and the United States on the limitation or even reduction of long-range strategic nuclear weapons had only just begun.[14]

More generally, peace activism in both parts of Germany emerged when the governments attempted to prepare the populations for a new stage in the superpower conflict through heightened propaganda against the respective cold war enemy as well as an increase in civil defence propaganda and drills. In the GDR, this went hand in hand with efforts to create a combat-ready and more militarised society through greater attention to military education in secondary schools and a new emphasis on conscription.[15] These debates not only reinforced both societies' sense of alarm about the renewed tensions, they also led to a growing uneasiness and splits within the governments – a development that created a multitude of links between governmental, party-political and societal activism. It is true that the Soviet Union had been seeking to exploit these splits since the mid-1970s by combining a proposal to the United Nations for a treaty on the world-wide non-use of force with a propaganda campaign in western Europe.[16]

The decisive surge in protest activity occurred only after the social democrat Egon Bahr, together with Willy Brandt (one of the main architects of *Ostpolitik*), openly criticised chancellor Helmut Schmidt for following US policies too closely and thus giving up German national interests for the sake of the alliance. This criticism first emerged after documents had been leaked that the US government had developed and intended to deploy a new kind of weapon, a 'neutron bomb', which could destroy human beings but would leave buildings intact. While the Schmidt government had endeavoured to prevent such a debate about nuclear weapons, it was a member of his own government who breached the consensus of staying silent and thus opened up geopolitics for public scrutiny.[17] The link between organised and movement politics could also be seen in the GDR, albeit on different levels and with different intensity. It was only in the context of the complex and problematic discussions between the East German government and the churches about their role in socialism that significant political space emerged in which peace activists were emboldened to

[14] Leopoldo Nuti, 'The Origins of the 1979 Dual Track Decision - a Survey', in idem, ed., *Crisis of Détente in Europe: From Helsinki to Gorbachev 1975-1985* (London: Routledge, 2008), 57-71.

[15] On the background, see Christian Sachse, *Aktive Jugend – wohlerzogen und diszipliniert: Wehrerziehung in der DDR als Sozialisations- und Herrschaftsinstrument (1960-1973)* (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2000).

[16] Akten zur Deutschen Auswärtigen Politik, 1976/II, Document 307, 1397-1404.

[17] Egon Bahr, 'Ist die Menschheit dabei, verrückt zu werden?', *Vorwärts* 29 (21 Jul. 1977), 4. On the background see Kristina Spohr Readman, 'Germany and the politics of the neutron bomb, 1975-1979', *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, 21, 2 (2010). 259-285.

vent their opinions. This created the conditions in which groups were able to develop policies that diverged from the official statements of the SED.[18]

For instance, it was in this context that the glaring contrast between the GDR and the Soviet Union's roles as 'peace states' and the practice of militarising GDR society was first voiced. The peace movements that began to appear in both German polities at this time were responses to the threats to personal and national security that, activists argued, were being ignored by their governments. Whereas both governments defined 'security' in terms of an equilibrium of forces between east and west that made the stationing of new weapons necessary, peace activists argued for an 'alternative' form of security that highlighted personal needs.[19]

Both populations were already highly sensitised to their 'security' as well as towards environmental issues that transcended national boundaries.[20] And yet, what is striking is the extent to which activists interpreted the events from a pronouncedly German perspective; engagement with protests around the world remained marginal and rhetorical in the west, and even the East German activists showed little reaction to the upheavals in Poland. Rather, it was the GDR government's tightening of security in the wake of the Polish events and the further infringements on freedoms that fuelled their protests.

Peace movement activism was especially controversial in the German-German context. The GDR government regarded itself as a peace state – independent peace activism was, therefore, by definition impossible. If it occurred, this meant that not peace, but the undermining of real existing socialism was the aim of activists and hence had to be countered.[21] In West Germany, too, 'peace' had almost become a taboo word. Until the early 1970s peace campaigners were confronted with accusations that they acted as communist propagandists with direct support from the GDR.[22] And

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[18] Detlef Pollack, 'Die konstitutive Widersprüchlichkeit der DDR: Oder: War die DDR-Gesellschaft homogen?', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 24 (1998), 110-131.

[19] See, for example, the Krefeld Appeal (16 November 1980) available at www.germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=1129 (last visited 4 Jan. 2012).

[20] Jens Ivo Engels, *Naturpolitik in der Bundesrepublik: Ideenwelt und politische Verhaltensstile in Naturschutz und Umweltbewegung 1950-1980* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2006), ch. 10.

[21] Akademie für Staats- und Rechtswissenschaft der DDR, ed., *Unser Staat* (East Berlin: Akademie für Staats- und Rechtswissenschaft der DDR, 1989), 185.

[22] Anselm Doering-Manteuffel, 'Im Kampf um "Frieden" und "Freiheit": Über den Zusammenhang von Ideologie und Sozialkultur im Ost-West-Konflikt', in Hans Günter Hockerts, ed., *Koordinaten deutscher Geschichte im Zeitalter des Ost-West-Konflikts* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2003), 29-48.

while peace activism itself and the renewal of policies of détente in the mid-1980s made 'peace' more respectable, the term retained at least some of its negative associations until 1989-90. Hence, at a meeting between the East German Bishop of Saxony, Johannes Hempel, and the Secretary of State for Church Affairs in the GDR, Klaus Gysi, Hempel told Gysi about chancellor Helmut Schmidt's comments: Schmidt was, Gysi reported, quite relieved to hear that there was no independent peace movement in the GDR, as he was already struggling to make political sense of its West German counterpart.[23]

Arguing for Peace

Peace movements in the Federal Republic and the GDR challenged their governments' 'geopolitical privacy' (Michael Mann).[24] While they operated in fundamentally different systems, both criticised a specific form of 'democracy' that was based on bureaucratic party-political rule and relegated issues of national security to the governmental and administrative apparatus that had emerged after 1945. Benjamin Ziemann has highlighted the key difference in perceptions between governmental and social movement actors: while the West and East German governments and their supporters highlighted the stability of the arms race, though admitting manageable risks, protesters voiced a different interpretation of the cold war and the arms race by emphasising the real and present dangers that nuclear weapons posed. They were thus able to develop an alternative perception of the reality of the cold war.[25] In order to do this, movement activists in both the Federal Republic and the GDR envisaged an understanding of violence that went beyond the injury of human bodies by privileging the psychosomatic impact of fears as a much deeper and fundamental form of violence.[26]

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[23] Klein, *"Frieden und Gerechtigkeit!"*, 82: Information über das Gespräch Staatssekretär Gysi mit Landesbischof Hempel am 12.3.1982 in der Dienststelle des Staatssekretärs, fol. 40, DY30/ IV B2/14/18, Sammlung Partei und Massenorganisationen im Bundesarchiv, Berlin (hereafter: SAPMO-BArch).

[24] Michael Mann, *States, War and Capitalism: Studies in Political Sociology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), 32. On the general point on reading activism and governmental policy together see Ziemann, 'Situating Peace Movements', 17-18.

[25] Ziemann, 'Situating Peace Movements', 19, following Thorsten Bonacker and Lars Klein, 'Politischer Protest zwischen latenten Strukturen und manifesten Konflikten', *Mitteilungsblatt des Instituts für soziale Bewegungen* 32 (2004), 192-213.

[26] For an example from the GDR, see Dieter Stollberg, 'Die alltägliche Angst', in Herbert Gornik, ed., *Wege aus der Angst* (Freiburg: Christophorus, 1987), 39-48.

Accordingly, rather than looking for governmental solutions to these concerns, activists sought to transform society by transforming themselves through the themes of reconciliation, tolerance and solidarity.[27] Paradoxically, however, peace activists continued to mirror, not transcend, cold war politics via their opposition. On the surface, much of this activism and rhetoric appear as the result of a specifically Protestant culture – so much so that one commentator has gone so far as to call the protests in Germany in 1989 a 'Protestant Revolution'.[28] This reflects the importance of Protestant Christians for the campaigns.[29] Yet the broad participation of Catholics in the East and West German protests makes it difficult to take this argument much further. It makes more sense to interpret the peace movements' moral, if not religious, language as a distinctive blurring of the boundaries between religion and politics with the aim of creating legitimacy for the movement and transcending the traditional boundaries of respectable politics.[30] Fundamentally, East and West German peace activists highlighted their personal fears and the hope of overcoming these fears through political activism. Imagining an apocalypse of nuclear death lay at the root of these fears and was frequently linked to a pairing of Auschwitz and Hiroshima, often elided as 'Euroshima'.[31]

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[27] See, for example, Markus Meckel, 'Zur Selbstverständigung von Friedenskreisen', in idem and Martin Gutzeit, eds., *Opposition in der DDR: Zehn Jahre kirchliche Friedensarbeit: Kommentierte Quellentexte* (Cologne: Bund Verlag, 1994), 129. Conceptually see Belinda Davis et al., eds., *Changing the World, Changing Oneself: Political Protest and Collective Identities in West Germany and the US in the 1960s and 1970s* (New York: Berghahn, 2010) and her important 'What's Left? Popular and Democratic Political Participation in Postwar Europe', *American Historical Review* 113, 2 (2008), 363-390.

[28] Trutz Rendtorff, ed., *Protestantische Revolution? Kirche und Theologie in der DDR: Ekklesiologische Voraussetzungen, politischer Kontext, theologische und historische Kriterien* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993).

[29] On this typology of the role of religion in predominantly Protestant and Catholic societies and this conceptualisation see Ziemann, 'Situating Peace Movements', 33-34, following Werner Kaltefleiter and Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, 'Towards a Comparative Analysis of Peace Movements', in idem, eds., *Peace Movements in Europe and the United States* (London: Taylor and Francis, 1985), 186-204, at 196.

[30] See Daniel Gerster, *Friedensdialoge im Kalten Krieg: Eine Geschichte der Katholiken in der Bundesrepublik, 1957-1983* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2012); idem, 'Von Pilgerfahrten zu Protestmärschen? Zum Wandel des katholischen Friedensengagements in den USA und der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1945-1990', *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 51 (2011), 311-342; Jan-Ole Wiechmann, 'Der Streit um die Bergpredigt: Säkulare Vernunft und religiöser Glaube in der christlichen Friedensbewegung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (1977-1984)', *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 51 (2011), 343-374.

[31] See Benjamin Ziemann, 'A Quantum of Solace? European Peace Movements during the Cold War and their elective affinities', *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte*, 49 (2009), 351-389, at 378. On the spatial dimensions see the pathbreaking study by Susanne Schregel, *Der*

The experience of the cold war and the memories of mass death in the Second World War thus appeared to fall into one.[32] By drawing on these tropes, activists, paradoxically, adopted and furthered a discourse of victimisation that characterised more mainstream memories of the Second World War.[33]

This formed part of the discussions across eastern and western Europe in which activists critiqued the danger of nuclear armaments in the context of the debates about the 'exterminist' nature of the cold war system, a system that threatened to destroy humankind through technical errors or wilful annihilation by one of the superpowers.[34] GDR activists made similar remarks on the threats stemming from nuclear weapons and, after the Chernobyl incident in 1986, of nuclear power stations as technological threats to global survival.[35] Moreover, especially after Gorbachev had announced a new way of organising state socialism in 1987, an increasing number of activists questioned whether Soviet troops should still be on East German soil and cast themselves as victims of an occupation regime.[36]

Through such images of destruction and victimhood, peace movements not only tapped into and perpetuated German discourses of victimisation, they also constructed their fears as the only appropriate way of dealing with a pre-war situation. Accordingly, as Benjamin Ziemann has demonstrated in an important article on peace movement posters, many images, symbols and texts used by the peace activists showed the world immediately before the nuclear strike in order to highlight what it was they sought to protect.[37]

Movement activists regarded their protests and workshops as a way to create peace in the present and their activist community as a way of living

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Atomkrieg vor der Wohnungstür: Eine Politikgeschichte der neuen Friedensbewegung in der Bundesrepublik 1970-1984 (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2011).

[32] Benjamin Ziemann, 'The Code of Protest: Images of Peace in the West German Peace Movements, 1945-1990', *Contemporary European History* 17, 2 (2008), 237-261, at 253-254.

[33] Michael Geyer, 'Cold War Angst: The Case of West-German Opposition to Rearmament and Nuclear Weapons', in Hanna Schissler, ed., *Miracle Years: A Cultural History of West Germany, 1949-1968* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 376-408.

[34] Ziemann, 'Quantum of Solace', 367.

[35] See, for example, Werner Rüddenklau, *Störenfried: DDR-Opposition 1986-89* (Berlin: Basisdruck, 1992), 92 and Melanie Arndt, 'Verunsicherung vor und nach der Katastrophe: Von der Anti-AKW-Bewegung zum Engagement für die "Tschernobyl-Kinder"', *Zeithistorische Forschungen* 7, 2 (2010), 240-258.

[36] Erhard Crome and Jochen Franzke, 'DDR-Bürger und Perestroika: Eine Rekonstruktion unter Verwendung von Stimmungsberichten des MfS', *Berliner Debate INITIAL* 8, 1-2 (1997), 155-170.

[37] The following interpretation follows Benjamin Ziemann, 'Code of Protest', 254-255.

the peace then and there.[38] Hence, images of peace activism now accompanied images of (German) victimhood. Thus, protest appeared less as a means to an end than as an end in and of itself: 'peace needs movement', as a famous initiative from 1982 put it. Such images of peace activism already contained at least some of the aims of overcoming fear and creating security. Peace protest became the premeditated realisation of the end of fear.[39]

East and West German peace movement activists interpreted their own activism within the broader context of an ecologisation of politics in which different events and processes were intimately, yet often invisibly, connected. The use of nuclear energy to generate electricity and the building and stationing of nuclear weapons as well as other types of environmental damage thus became part of the collective phenomena through which human actions destroyed the ecosystem. Welfare had now been de-coupled from the notion of being and feeling well. Knowledge itself – and technological knowledge in particular – had become dangerous. Fear had become a virtue.[40] Given the importance of 'peace' as one of the key contested terms during the cold war, the semantics of peace were, however, highly ambiguous. It was especially obvious with the beginnings of the independent peace campaign 'Create Peace without Weapons' in the GDR (and the West German copy of this slogan) in 1979-80 and of the campaign 'Swords into Ploughshares' in 1981.[41] The slogan stemmed from the Bible verse Micah 4, 3 which had been engraved into the statue in front of the UN building in New York that the Soviet Union had donated to the United Nations at the beginning of the cold war in order to highlight its global fight for peace. Western activists who used the slogan and sticker were consequently accused of being communists.

In the GDR, by contrast, those who displayed the symbol risked being arrested (even if they removed the actual images and just wore an empty badge), even though official GDR publications still carried a picture of the statue and several publications had just interpreted Micah approvingly from

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[38] Wolfgang Templin, 'Arbeitspapier für "Frieden konkret" III/Schwerin 1985', quoted in Martin Gutzeit, 'Der Weg in die Opposition: Über das Selbstverständnis und die Rolle der "Opposition" im Herbst 1989 in der DDR', in Walter Euchner, ed., *Politische Opposition in Deutschland und im internationalen Vergleich* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993), 84-114, at 91, fn. 3.

[39] Ziemann, 'Code of Protest', 254.

[40] On the semantics of fear see Susanne Schregel, 'Konjunktur der Angst. "Politik der Subjektivität" und "neue Friedensbewegung"' in Bernd Greiner, Christian Th. Müller and Dierk Walter (eds.), *Angst im Kalten Krieg* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2009), 495-520.

[41] Anke Silomon, "*Schwerter zu Pflugscharen" und die DDR: Die Friedensarbeit der evangelischen Kirchen in der DDR im Rahmen der Friedensdekaden 1980 bis 1982* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999).

the perspective of Marxism-Leninism.[42] The same was true for the white dove on a blue background, the symbol of the communist-sponsored World Peace Council. Conservative commentators in West Germany referenced the symbol as evidence for the proliferation of communist propaganda. In the GDR, however, the government became increasingly worried about the use of the image outside the context of its own organisations.

It is with regard to this issue that the histories of the West and East German movements diverged. Whereas the West German peace movement continued to campaign under its original concept of 'peace', the East German movement, faced with substantial repression, increasingly focused on the domestic dimensions of peace, rather than international ones. The issue of peace thus came to be intricately linked with issues of human rights.[43] By highlighting fears that transcended the two superpower blocs, activists challenged some of the key ideological tenets of the cold war, namely, anti-totalitarianism in the west and the direct link between state socialism and progress in the east. Instead, they stressed one element that had remained submerged: nationalism and the role of the nation-state as the decision and 'identity space' (Charles S. Mayer) in domestic and international politics.

Activists in the GDR and the Federal Republic were united in trying to develop a third way between the superpowers and frequently linked this to a new role for the German nation.[44] Whereas East German activists could find in grassroots socialism and their struggle for civil rights an alternative to Soviet domination of the eastern bloc, West German protesters filled the conceptual void left by the dissociation from the US and the western alliance with a renewed emphasis on the German 'nation'.[45]

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[42] Helmut Zander, *Die Christen und die Friedensbewegungen in beiden deutschen Staaten: Beiträge zu einem Vergleich für die Jahre 1978-1987* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1989), 259-262.

[43] See, for example, the 'Initiative for Peace and Human Rights' founded in 1985-86 by Ulrike and Gerd Poppe, Bärbel Bohley, Wolfgang and Regina Templin and others; as well as the 'Peace Circle Dresden Johannstadt' and various eco-pacifist groups across the GDR. See Peter Eisenfeld, 'Innerer Frieden schafft äußeren Frieden: Erfahrungsbericht über Möglichkeiten und Grenzen der Friedensarbeit im Raum Dresden', in Ferdinand Kroh, ed., "*Freiheit ist immer Freiheit…" : Die Andersdenkenden in der DDR* (Frankfurt am Main: Ullstein, 1988), 119-140; and the discussions in Karsten Timmer, *Vom Aufbruch zum Umbruch: Die Bürgerbewegung der DDR* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), ch. 2.

[44] On the 'third way', see Ulrike Poppe, 'Der Weg ist das Ziel: Zum Selbstverständnis und der politischen Rolle oppositioneller Gruppen der achtziger Jahre', in idem et al., eds., *Zwischen Selbstbehauptung und Anpassung: Formen des Widerstands und der Oppostion in der DDR* (Berlin: Ch. Links, 1995), 244-272, at 271.

[45] This aspect is highlighted by Benjamin Ziemann in his important essay 'A Quantum of Solace?', 376-378 and is brought out succinctly in the contemporaneous assessment by Dan Diner, 'The "National Question" in the Peace Movement – Origins and Tendencies',

What contemporaries called 'new nationalism' was often linked to demands for the withdrawal of foreign forces from German soil so that Germany could finally fulfil its mission to create peace in Europe by regaining its sovereignty.[46] From the mid-1980s onwards, this topic was taken up by East German peace groups, whose members explicitly addressed the implications of such a view for the politics of memory in Germany. 'The division of Germany', argued members of the East German Peace Circle Friedrichsfelde (*Friedenskreis Friedrichsfelde*) in a letter to their West German friends, 'was not the result of the Second World War, but of the Cold War.'[47] By expressing their protest in this way, both movements fundamentally challenged the boundaries of the political in their respective polities. Stressing the importance of 'direct' or 'grassroots' democracy, they gave voice to a vision of the political process that lay outside the parameters of state socialism in the east and the model of bureaucratic party politics and elections that had emerged in West Germany and western Europe since 1945.[48]

This conception of 'democracy' found expression in the structure of the protests the activists took part in – 'peace camps' and 'workshops' as well as 'dialogues' as forms of politics that privileged bottom-up interactions, rather than top-down discussions according to bureaucratic rules.[49] The images of democracy and community mirrored the images of war that both movements developed. Whereas politics appeared as an anonymous process, devoid of experiences and emotions, protesters highlighted their activism and the emotional warmth of their protest community. Activists in the GDR, in particular, emphasised the role of this community, singing 'We shall overcome!', not only in helping them deal with their fears of

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New German Critique 28, 1 (1983), 86-107. For rare evidence of a similar argument in the East German peace movement at this early stage of the protests, see Robert Havemann's open letter to Brezhnev, printed in *die tageszeitung* (*taz)*, 7 Oct. 1981.

[46] Ziemann, 'A Quantum of Solace?', 376-378 also citing Erhard Eppler, *Die tödliche Utopie der Sicherheit* (Reinbek: rororo, 1983), 71 and Oskar Lafontaine, *Angst vor den Freunden: Die Atomwaffenstrategie der Supermächte zerstört die Bündnisse* (Reinbek: rororo, 1983).

[47] Klein, *"Frieden und Gerechtigkeit!"*, 135: Offener Brief des Friedenskreises Friedrichsfelde an die Friedensbewegung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland – über den Bundesvorstand der Grünen, 18 Feb. 1985, no shelfmark, Friedenskreis Friedrichsfelde, MDA.

[48] On the background, see Martin Conway, 'Democracy in Postwar Western Europe: The Triumph of a Political Model', *European History Quarterly* 32, 1 (2002), 59-84.

[49] Interview with Jochen Läßig and Bärbel Bohley in Hagen Findeis, ed., *Die Entzauberung des Politischen: Was ist aus den politisch-alternativen Gruppen der DDR geworden? Interviews mit ehemals führenden Vertretern* (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1994), 241 and 251.

nuclear war, but also with the fear of violence meted out by the security forces.[50]

Connections

The similarity of these interpretations emerged from a multitude of often complicated and controversial connections between the two movements. They took shape within the contexts of personal and institutional contacts as well as mutual observations through movement and the mass media. Many of these connections were highly conflictual, as both movements struggled to come to terms with their positions within fundamentally different political systems. It was especially the frequent contacts and visits by western peace activists, such as that of the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Evangelischen Jugend* (Working Group of Protestant Youth) to the SED and their talks with the official *Freie Deutsche Jugend* (Free German Youth – FDJ) that raised many critical eyebrows amongst East German activists.[51]

Nonetheless, connections between the two movements can be traced back to their origins in the mid-1970s when the dissidents Rudolf Bahro and Wolf Biermann were expelled from the GDR and settled in the Federal Republic. The two intellectuals acted as transmission belts for ideas between the two movements. They professed an environmentally conscious form of socialism that found its realisation in grassroots activities and thus were attractive to both the environmental and peace movements in West Germany as well as the growing peace activism in the east.[52] Likewise, journalists close to the West German Green Party and with tight links to the East German peace movements, such as Wilhelm Knabe, Peter Wensierski and Wolfgang Büscher, ensured that a modicum of reports reached the West German movement and general mass media. In particular, the West Berlin newspaper *tageszeitung*, which had emerged out of the social movement milieu in the 1970s, turned into a clearing house for information. The Green Party, which had developed from a variety of environmental and peace movements on the state and federal levels between the late 1970s and early 1980s and thus had many natural and personal affinities to the peace activists, was especially open to interactions with East German peace

[50] See the first-hand account by the East German historian Hartmut Zwahr on Leipzig: *Ende einer Selbstzerstörung: Leipzig und die Revolution in der DDR* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993), especially 25.

[51] Klein, "*Frieden und Gerechtigkeit!*", 181-182.

[52] See, for example, 'DDR: Die Bürger werden aufsässig', *Der Spiegel*, 17 Oct. 1977, 46-65, at 46-48.

groups, mainly through Marie-Luise Lindemann, Elsbeth Zylla and Willi Magg from its West Berlin branch, the *Alternative Liste* ('Alternative List'). Green politician Petra Kelly made a keen effort to bridge the 'iron curtain', often in the context of the European Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (END). Other connections took place in the more general context between Protestant youth organisations.[53]

Likewise, if and when they were allowed to travel, East German activists tried to make a contribution to West German campaigns. For example, on 10 June 1982 Jürgen Fuchs spoke at a major peace protest in Bonn and, after some internal debate in the movement, East German peace activist Heino Falcke addressed the big anti-NATO demonstration in Bonn in October 1983. On a more personal level, and connecting ideas of peace with their enactment, the East and West German peace movements organised 'personal peace treaties' between activists in both Gemanys in order to achieve 'disarmament from below' and contribute to the demise of the concept of two superpower blocs.[54]

Importance and Legacies

As Benjamin Ziemann has emphasised, the impact of movement activism at the time did not lie in changing governmental policies. Rather, it lay in the ways in which the movements' challenges to a key element of governmental legitimacy – the guarantee of security for its citizens – led to gradual adaptations within political-cultural assumptions about the role government plays vis-à-vis society.[55] In the Federal Republic, the popularity of Willy Brandt's policies of détente and his support for the peace movement in the early 1980s meant that 'peace' and 'understanding between East and West' also gradually entered into the governing Christian Democrats' conception of foreign and defence policies later in the decade.

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[53] See, for example, Volkmar Deile, 'Vorwort' in Theologische Studienabteilung, eds., *Leben und Bleiben in der DDR* (West Berlin: Aktion Sühnezeichen, 1985), 3-4; Brief von Wolfram Tschiche an Birgit Arkenstette, 21 Feb. 1985, in Karlheinz Lipp, et al., eds., *Frieden und Friedensbewegung in Deutschland 1892-1982: Ein Lesebuch* (Essen: Klartext 2010), 385-386. On the background, see Neubert, *Geschichte der Opposition*, 478-479 and 637-643. For Dutch German-German connections see Beatrice de Graaf, *Über die Mauer: Die niederländischen Kirchen, die Friedensbewegung und die DDR* (Münster: agenda, 2007).

[54] Andreas Schaller, 'Die persönlichen Friedensverträge', in *Spuren 1987*, 66-69 and Saskia Richter, 'Petra Kelly als Mittlerin in der transnationalen Friedensbewegung gegen den NATO-Doppelbeschluss', *Mitteilungsblatt des Instituts für soziale Bewegungen* 44 (2010), 7-28.

[55] Benjamin Ziemann, 'Situating Peace Movements', 20-22.

Up to the early 1980s, some CDU politicians had vigorously denounced the stress on 'peace' in Brandt's *Ostpolitik* as a sign of his communist past and of a dangerous undermining of West German national security.[56] This gradual realignment was not simply a function of the internal party battles between fundamentalists and modernists within the CDU, but was also the result of an engagement with the ideas that the peace movement and its most prominent opponents professed. The ways in which many of the peace movement activists in East and West Germany linked their activities to the human rights demands of the Helsinki process further contributed to this. Likewise, signs of superpower détente in the mid-to-late 1980s made talking about peace respectable.[57]

The tentative shift in conservative politicians' attitudes to conscientious objectors, which was strengthened by the engagement with the peace movement, underlines this: discussions in the CDU – and expressions of this in legislation – moved from notions that conscientious objectors lacked the essential quality of citizens ready to die for their country towards ones that highlighted commitment to social service in the local community.[58] Together with the growing success of the recently founded Green Party in state and federal elections, these changes in party-political attitudes mirrored a more general trend in West German public opinion towards non-violent conceptions of statehood and government that had already begun in the debates on 'terrorism' in the 1970s and had now reached significant proportions. These conceptions emphasised the role of government in society as an essentially non-violent one.

Similar shifts occurred in the GDR. Because of the fundamentally different character of the political system, however, the ambiguities of such non-violent definitions of government were thrown into much sharper relief. When the SED, the secret services and the police forces were confronted with peace activism, they were increasingly at pains to avoid any violent confrontations and were under increasing pressure to justify it when it happened. Yet governmental control now took on an entirely different and much more sinister form. Rather than trying to jail members of the opposition, the SED government sought to retain its domestic legitimacy and international reputation by attempting to infiltrate peace groups with secret service agents and instigate debates that would occupy peace move-

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[56] Clay Clemens, *Reluctant Realists: The Christian Democrats and West German Ostpolitik* (Durham: NC and London: Duke University Press, 1989), chs. 2-4.

[57] See the reports in *Die Zeit*, 31 Oct. 1980 and *Die Welt*, 30 Oct. 1980. By contrast, see Deutscher Bundestag, Drucksache 8/1014, 68. Anfrage Dr. Mertes, (20.9.1977), 40.

[58] Patrick Bernhard, *Zivildienst zwischen Reform und Revolte: Eine bundesdeutsche Institution im gesellschaftlichen Wandel 1961-1982* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2005).

ment activists with themselves rather than with the issues. This led to betrayals even amongst married couples and within families. At the same time, rather than using criminal law as a measure against the activists, the GDR regime shifted the focus to public order legislation. As a result of this, several activists were arrested. The most prominent were probably Ulrike Poppe and Bärbel Bohley who were kept at the Berlin-Hohenschönhausen secret service prison for six weeks before they were released in the wake of protests by western governments and news media.[59]

While a period of seeming toleration of peace and environmental groups began after the discussions between the SPD and the SED on a common socialist heritage and Erich Honecker's visit to the Federal Republic in 1987, direct suppression continued nonetheless. In September 1987, police raided the environmental library in Berlin and independent demonstrations on 17 January 1988 to mark the anniversary of the killing of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht led to the arrest of a number of activists and the expulsion of others. It was only during the wave of protests in the summer and autumn of 1989 that the turn in rhetoric came to be connected with changes in actual practices. Given the size and resilience of the protests and the international context – the lack of Soviet support for an armed backlash, the contemporaneous non-violent protests across eastern Europe – the GDR government and the security services could no longer plausibly justify violent actions. Whereas before the summer of 1989, many of the party-controlled media had labelled the peace and civil rights protesters 'rowdies', this term lacked any credibility as entirely peaceful and pronouncedly disciplined protesters held vigils, prayed in public and displayed posters reading 'we are not rowdies, we are non-violent'.

The repercussions this had on the legitimacy of the state security apparatus among both its members and the general public were enormous. They led the SED to modify its position, especially because it had, from September 1989 onwards come under growing international scrutiny by the western news media. The media were sensitive to this issue as the Tiananmen Square massacre in China in June 1989 had drawn significant criticism and had already become a topic in the GDR protests.[60]

Although party newspapers still called activists 'dangerous rowdies bent on violence' in early September and while Honecker had prepared the security forces for a national state of emergency, by early October 1989 the

[59] See Sung-Wan Choi, *Von der Dissidenz zur Opposition: Die politisch alternativen Gruppen in der DDR von 1978 bis 1989* (Cologne: Wissenschaft & Politik, 1999), 149-151.

[60] Martin Sabrow, '"1989" und die Rolle der Gewalt in Ostdeutschland', in idem, ed., *1989*, 9-31.

situation looked decisively different.[61] The 'cold civil war' (Patrick Major) had become real on Dresden's streets at the beginning of the month, leading to much bloodshed between protesters and the police around the railway station.[62] But rather than resulting in a strengthening of the government's authority, widespread criticism of police action even from within the ranks of the SED led to a remarkable change in tone.[63] Even party newspapers now emphasised the non-violent character of the demonstrations and demanded: 'No violence!' Dialogues emerged between protesters and local party and government officials in towns and cities across the country.[64] At the same time, Honecker's position in the party became increasingly weaker as a group of SED politicians around Egon Krenz and Hans Modrow promoted similar dialogues on a national level and ultimately toppled him on 18 October 1989 as SED Secretary General. For the short period between autumn-winter 1989 and the local and state elections in spring-summer 1990 this process fostered the emergence of a specific type of movement society within what was still formally the GDR. It took the form of ad hoc participatory democracy that circumvented more highly-organised means of politics: dialogues on the local, regional and national levels, symbolised by the metaphor of the 'round table' ('*runder Tisch*'), which sought to carry not only the contents, but also the form of the protests forwards.[65]

The different contexts in which East and West German protesters operated led to a disjuncture between East and West German politics in 1989, which expressed significant differences in the temporalities of the last decade of the cold war. Although non-violent conceptions of government and statehood had become influential in both political systems, they had divergent meanings. Whereas they had percolated through West German political culture and thus lost most of their oppositional potential, East German peace campaigns had become aligned with movements for civil

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[61] Armin Mitter and Stefan Wolle, eds., *Ich liebe euch doch alle! Befehle und Lageberichte des MfS Januar-November 1989* (Berlin: Ch. Links, 1990), 200.

[62] Eckhard Bahr, et al., *Sieben Tage im Oktober: Aufbruch in Dresden* (Leipzig: Forum, 1990). On the general background, see Michael Richter, *Die Friedliche Revolution: Aufbruch zur Demokratie in Sachsen*, vol.1, 2nd edn (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2010).

[63] 'Sicherheitskräfte hielten sich bei Demonstrationen in Leipzig zurück', *Der Tagesspiegel*, 27 Sep. 1989; Walter Süß, *Staatssicherheit am Ende: Warum es den Mächtigen nicht gelang, eine Revolution zu verhindern* (Berlin: Ch. Links, 1999).

[64] See Zwahr, *Ende*, 76-77, 98.

[65] On SPD and peace movement integration and the Green Party, see Detlef Pollack, 'Was ist aus den Bürgerbewegungen und Oppositionsgruppen der DDR geworden?', *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* 40-41 (1995), 34-45.

rights. In West Germany, activists had, paradoxically, learned to live with the Bomb. The top-down structure of the GDR's political system denied East German activists that opportunity.

Although GDR governmental discourse and practices (from the autumn of 1989) shifted towards non-violent conceptions of rule and moved away from direct and violent interventions at demonstrations, the political system remained a 'dictatorship of borders' (Thomas Lindenberger) in which the forms and contents of politics were not only limited discursively (as in the west), but also in the shape of 'hard power' and direct regulation. Even in the autumn of 1989, the space for what counted as legitimate politics in the eyes of the SED remained, therefore, much more narrowly drawn than in the Federal Republic; and demonstrating for peace itself was automatically a claim for fundamental civil rights.[66]

Such claims came to be directly linked to the Wall as the symbol and manifestation of the borders that structured life in the GDR. When East German activists campaigned for an end to visualising international politics in a bipolar way, they always meant the geographical scope of the East German polity as well even if they wished to maintain a distinct identity from the Federal Republic.[67]

The fact that East German activists had connected their fears and desires to create peace with demands for basic civil rights and more far-reaching forms of participatory democracy (that could not be channelled into the framework of the GDR's political system) meant that for them the socio-political history of the cold war ended later than 1989-90. And yet, peace activism and the discussions about it on both sides provided the conditions for the end of the cold war and the *peaceful* character of the revolution of 1989-90.[68]

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[66] Thomas Lindenberger, 'Diktatur der Grenze(n): Die eingemauerte Gesellschaft und ihre Feinde', in Hans-Hermann Hertle, Konrad H. Jarausch and Christoph Kleßmann, eds., *Mauerbau und Mauerfall: Ursachen – Verlauf – Auswirkungen* (Berlin: Ch. Links, 2002), 203-213.

[67] Ludwig Drees, 'Aus der Isolation zu Wegen der Identifikation', in Stephan Bickhardt, et al., eds., *Recht ströme wie Wasser: Christen in der DDR für Absage an Praxis und Prinzip der Abgrenzung: Ein Arbeitsbuch* (West Berlin: Wichern, 1988), 44-49.

[68] This transformation did not, of course, imply that violence disappeared entirely from German society. Nor did it lead to an absence of violent practices in governmental forms of rule. What is meant here is that the norms through which violent behaviour was assessed in both societies changed. Cf. Thomas Lindenberger, 'From the Chopped-off Hand to the Twisted Foot: Citizenship and Police Violence in 20th Century Germany', in Geoff Eley and Jan Palmowski, eds., *Citizenship and National Identity in Twentieth Century Germany* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008), 108-128.

List of Abbreviations

AAN	Archiwum Akt Nowych [Central Archive of Modern Records in Warsaw]
ABS ČR	Archiv bezpečnostnich složek České Republiky [Archives of Security Forces of the Czech Republic]
ABVV/FGTB	Algemeen Belgisch Vakverbond / Fédération Générale du Travail de Belgique [General Federation of Belgian Labour]
ACV/CSC	Algemeen Christelijk Vakverbond / Confédération des syndicats chrétiens [Confederation of Christian Trade Unions]
AdsD	Archiv der sozialen Demokratie [Archives of Social Democracy]
AEJ	Arbeitsgemeinschaft der evangelischen Jugend in Deutschland e.V. [national federation of Protestant youth organizations in Germany]
AFL-CIO	American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations
AFP	Agence France-Presse
AIPN	Archiwum Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej [Institute of National Remembrance Archives]
AJV	Archives Jules Verhelst
Amsab-ISG	Amsab-Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis [Amsab Institute of Social History]
AMSZ	Archiwum Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych [Polish Foreign Ministry Archives]
Anti-AKW	Anti-Atomkraft-Bewegung [anti-nuclear movement]
AP	Associated Press
AV ČR	Akademie věd České Republiky [Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic]
BArch	Bundesarchiv Berlin [Federal German Archives]
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BpB	Bundesszentrale für politische Bildung [German Federal Agency for Political Education]
BstU	Behörde des Bundesbeauftragten für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen Deutschen Demo-

	kratischen Republik [Federal Commissioner for the Stasi Archives]
CBS	Columbia Broadcasting System
CDU	Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands [Christian Democratic Union of Germany]
CEU	Central European University
CND	Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament in Great Britain
CNSP	Comité Nicaragüense de Solidaridad con los Pueblos [Nicaraguan Committee in Solidarity with the People]
CODENE	Comité pour le désarmement nucleair en Europe [Committee for nuclear disarmement in Europe]
COH, ÚSD	Center for Oral History, Institute for Contemporary History, Prague
CSCE	Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe
ČSSR	Československá socialistická republika [Czechoslovak Socialist Republic]
DACOB	Documentatie en Archiefcentrum van de Communistiche Beweging [Centre of Communist Archives in Belgium, Brussels]
DDR	Deutsche Demokratische Republik, see GDR
Diamat	dialectic materialism
DIE	Departament Instytucji Europejskich [Department of European Institutions]
dpa	Deutsche Presseagentur [German Press Agency]
DSiP	Departament Studiów i Programowania [Department of Studies and Programming]
END	European Nuclear Disarmament
EU	European Union
FACS	Fundación Agusto César Sandino
FAZ	Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung
FDJ	Freie Deutsche Jugend [Free German Youth]
FDP	Freie Demokratische Partei [Free Democratic Party]
FfF	Frauen für den Frieden [Women for Peace]
Fidesz	Hungarian Association of Young Democrats
FJJ	Fondation Jean Jaurès, Paris
FNSP	Fondation nationale des sciences politiques [National Foundation of Political Science]
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
FSLN	Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional [Sandinista National Liberation Front]
GDR	German Democratic Republic

HRM	Hnutí revoluční mládeže [Movement of Revolutionary Youth in Czechoslovakia]
ICFTU	International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
IFM	Initiative Frieden und Menschenrechte [Initiative for Peace and Human Rights]
IISH	International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam
IKV	Interkerkelijk Vredesberaad [Inter-church Peace Council]
ILO	International Labour Organization
IPN	Instytut Pamięci Narodowej [Institute of National Remembrance]
ISP PAN	Instytut Studiów Politycznych Polskiej Akademii Nauk [Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences]
JHS	Juristische Hochschule des MfS [law college of the Ministry for State Security]
KADOC	Documentatie- en Onderzoekscentrum voor Religie, Cultuur en Samenleving [Documentation and Research Centre for Religion, Culture and Society]
KARTA AW	KARTA Archives, Warsaw
KBWE	Konferencja Bezpieczeństwa i Współpracy w Europie; see CSCE
KC PZPR	Komitet Centralny Polskiej Zjednoczonej Partii Robotniczej [Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party]
KC KPCz	Komitet Centralny Komunistycznej Partii Czechosłowacji [Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia], cf. KSČ
KGB	Komitet gosudarstvennoy bezopasnosti [Committee for State Security]
KOR	Komitet Obrony Robotników [Workers' Defence Committee]
KOS	Komitet Oporu Społecznego [Societal Resistance Committee]
Kpt	kapitan [captain]
KSČ	Komunistická strana Československa [Communist Party of Czechoslovakia]
KSS	Komunistická strana Slovenska [Communist Party of Slovakia]
KSS "KOR"	Komitet Samoobrony Społecznej [Committee for Social Self-Defense], see KOR
KSZE	Konferenz über Sicherheit und Zusammenarbeit in Europa, see CSCE

LO	Landesorganisationen i Danmark [Danish Confederation of Trade Unions]
LSE	London School of Economics and Political Science
MAK	Midden Amerika Komitee [Committee for Central America]
MDA	Matthias Domaschk Archives
MfS	Ministerium für Staatssicherheit [Ministry for State Security], Stasi
MSW	Ministerstwo Spraw Wewnętrznych [Polish Ministry of the Interior]
MSZ	Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych [Polish Foreign Ministry]
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDR	Nemecká Demokratická Republika, see GDR
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NKN	Nicaragua Komitee Nederland
NMS	Nezávislé Mírové Sdružení [Independent Peace Association]
NSZZ "Solidarność"	Niezależny Samorządny Związek Zawodowy "Solidarność" [Independent Self-Governing Trade Union "Solidarity"]
NVA	Nationale Volksarmee [National People's Army]
NYT	New York Times
NZS	Niezależne Zrzeszenie Studentów [Independent Student Association]
OCI	Organisation Communiste Internationaliste [Internationalist Communist Organisation]
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
OP	operativer Vorgang [operational procedure]
PCI	Partito Communista Italiano [Italian Communist Party]
PL	Pravo lidu [free Czechoslovakian press service]
PrA HL	Private Archives Hans Langenberg
PRP	People's Republic of Poland
PS	Parti socialiste [French Socialist Party]
PSI	Partito Socialista Italiano [Italian Socialist Party]
RHG	Robert-Havemann-Gesellschaft [Robert-Havemann-Society]
SAPMO	Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der DDR im Bundesarchiv [Foundation for the Archive of the Parties and Mass Organizations of the GDR in the Federal Archives]
SE IISH	SUCEE Archives, International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam
SED	Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands [Socialist Unity Party of Germany]

SFIO	Section Française de l'Internationale Ouvrière [French Section of the Workers' International]
SI	Socialist International
SIA IISH	Socialist International Archives, International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam
SKS	Studencki Komitet Solidarności [Student Solidarity Committee]
SNB	Sbor národní bezpečnosti [National Security Corps]
SOK	Sozialistisches Osteuropakomitee [Socialist Committee for Eastern Europe]
SPD	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands [Social Democratic Party of Germany]
SPÖ	Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs [Social Democratic Party of Austria]
SSSR	Soyuz Sovetskikh Sotsialisticheskikh Respublik, see USSR
Stasi	state security police in GDR; cf. MfS
StB	Státní bezpečnost [State security]
SUCEE	Socialist Union of Central and Eastern Europe
SZ ZSRR	Siły Zbrojne ZSRR [Armed Forces of the USSR]
TKK	Tymczasowa Komisja Koordynacyjna (NSZZ "Solidarność") [Provisional Coordinating Commission]
UN	United Nations
UPI	United Press International
UW	Układ Warszawski [Warsaw Pact]
US	United States of America
ÚSD AV ČR	Ústav pro soudobé dějiny [Institute for Contemporary History of the Czech Academy of Sciences]
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
VONS	Výbor na obranu nespravedlivě stíhaných [Committee for the Defence of Those Unjustly Persecuted]
WB LoC	Papers of Whitman Bassow, Library of Congress
WCL	World Confederation of Labour
WiP	Wolność i Pokój [Freedom and Peace movement in Poland]
ZAIG [MfS]	Zentrale Auswertungs- und Informationsgruppe am MfS [Central Group for Evaluation and Information]
ZOMO	Zmotoryzowane Odwody Milicji Obywatelskiej [Polish Motorized Reserves of the Citizens' Militia]
ZOV	Zentraler operativer Vorgang [main operational procedure]
ZSRR	Związek Socjalistycznych Republik Radzieckich, see USSR

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