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Discourse Beyond Borders: Periodicals, Dissidents, and European Cultural Spaces

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ABSTRACT

Émigré periodicals in Cold War Europe have long been considered isolated islands of Central and East European communities with limited relevance. In the second half of the Cold War, some of these periodicals functioned as crucial intersections of communication between dissidents, emigrants and Western European intellectuals. These periodicals were the greenhouses for the development of new definitions of Central Europe, Eastern Europe, and Europe at large. This article studies Cold War émigré periodicals from a spatial perspective and argues that they can be analysed as European cultural spaces. In this approach, European cultural spaces are seen as insular components of a European public sphere. The particular settings (spaces) within which the periodicals developed have contributed greatly to the ideas that they expressed. The specific limits and functions of periodicals such as *Kultura* or *Svědectví* [*Testimony*] have triggered perceptions of Central European and European solidarity. The originally Russian periodical *Kontinent* promoted an eventually less successful East European-Russian solidarity.

KEYWORDS

Central and Eastern Europe, emigrants, dissidents, European cultural spaces

Shortly before reform movements and impatient crowds terminated Europe's divide, the Hungarian dissident, novelist, essayist, and quintessential Central European intellectual György Konrád distinguished an 'international market of dissident ideas'.¹ Much more prominently than before, dissidents reached likeminded intellectuals in neighbouring countries, and particularly in the West. This growing exchange was noticed by others as well: Alain Finkielkraut observed in 1987 that 'eyes were opened' towards Central Europe.² This market of ideas between East and West communicated mainly through periodicals. Émigré periodicals from Rome, Berlin, or Paris played a decisive role in the contacts between intellectuals, and even between dissidents. Translated versions reached Western European or Northern American audiences. From the early 1980s onwards, new periodicals emerged that explained anti-communist and East European realities to a wider intellectual audience. These new stages and intellectual communities constituted new European cultural spaces in which new understandings of European solidarity were produced and promoted.

This article analyses the emergence of these new connections, loyalties and kinships from the pages of these periodicals. The debates on Central Europe and its relation to Western Europe are the best-known outcome. In this article, I argue that these periodicals were not merely the passive stages for these new ideas, but have decisively contributed to forming these ideas. From this point of departure, the émigré periodicals can be considered European cultural spaces: they implied and produced identities and visions of Europe. This article therefore opens with an attempt at aligning academic reflections on the periodical and European identities from the context of the *spatial turn* in the humanities. Subsequently, special attention is being paid to three pivotal émigré periodicals and their positions in the debate about Europe and Central Europe: the Polish *Kultura* (1947–2000), the Czech *Svědectví* [*Testimony*] (1956–92), and the multinational *Kontinent* (1974–).

Spatial Thought

In his 2003 work *In Space We Read Time*, Karl Schlögel declared his love for the 'spatial turn' in the historical sciences. Schlögel blames the nineteenth-century historicist obsession for 'durée, not *espace*' having come to dominate our perception of the past.³ The spatial turn in the humanities has largely been derived from the social sciences, primarily from geography and sociology. The groundwork for the spatial turn is often thought to have been designed by Edward Soja in his *Postmodern Geographies* (1989). His source of inspiration was *La production de l'espace* (1973) by the Marxist French philosopher Henri Lefèbvre, who, albeit somewhat inaccessibly, introduced space as an analytical category.

Soja's central concept thirdspace was inspired by Lefèbvre's three types of space. Lefèbvre had defined an 'espace perçu' [perceived space], an 'espace conçu' [mental or represented space] that together constituted a third space, the 'espace vécu' [lived space]. Opposite to a perceived space that refers to physical or geographical dimensions, we can distinguish a represented, mental, or social space of scientists or technocrats. The

- 1 György Konrád, *Antipolitik: Mitteleuropäische Meditationen* [*Anti-Politics: Central European Meditations*] (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1988), p. 200.
- 2 Quoted in Friederike Kind-Kovács, 'An "Other Europe" through Literature', in *Europa im Ostblock: Vorstellungen und Diskurse (1945–1991)* [*Europe in the Eastern Bloc: Imaginations and Discourses (1945–1991)*], ed. by Paulina Gulińska-Jurgiel, Jose M. Faraldo, and Christian Domnitz (Köln: Böhlau, 2007), pp. 267–99 (p. 294).
- 3 Karl Schlögel, *Im Raume lesen wir die Zeit: Über Zivilisationsgeschichte und Geopolitik* [*In Space We Read Time: On the History of Civilization and Geopolitics*] (München: Hanser, 2003), p. 38.

lived space or Soja's thirdspace is a more abstract notion, but can be understood as a combination of perceived space and represented space. Soja applies this spatial approach mainly to the analysis of urban environments.

In Soja's definitions, spatial thought is also heir to Bourdieu's analysis of the cultural trade. Soja proposed spatial capital as a relevant category next to Bourdieu's notion of cultural capital.⁴ Cultural capital depends on space, and it produces spaces. Soja explicitly connects his discussion to discourses of othering. His usage of notions such as thirdspace suggests that he operates with a critical or even emancipatory strategy in his spatial approach, much like most spatial thought.⁵ In recent years, Soja has explored this emancipatory dimension further.⁶ His most telling case study is probably the domain of public transport in Los Angeles. He has analysed how the network of buses became the realm of workers and less educated citizens, disconnected from railway transport and particularly from environments that are intended for private cars, with the potential danger of closing down bus connections.⁷ Effective popular opposition prevented this, but the case study illustrates how means of transport contribute to the construction of physical *and* mental spaces. Destinations and fellow passengers create and determine spaces. Soja's spatial approach attempts at unravelling the norms within these spaces.

The spatial turn in the humanities, and particularly in the historical sciences, is both empirically and methodologically different from that of post-structuralist (Lefebvre) and post-modern (Soja) geographers. The historical sciences have traditionally preferred a topographical or cartographical approach. Under the label of mental mapping the spatial turn has produced invaluable results with regard to the mental construction of historical and cultural regions, such as Central and Eastern Europe, or the Middle East. Its underlying assumption is that the implicit or explicit awareness of the historical (mental) reality of a region influences or even guides historical action.⁸ In *Inventing Eastern Europe* (1991), Larry Wolff explored how French Enlightened philosophers drew the map of civilization simultaneously to their 'discovery' of the (European) East.⁹ His later book *Venice and the Slavs* (2001) built on this and unravelled this civilizational rift between the (European) East and the West in the minds of eighteenth-century Venetians 'discovering' Dalmatia and the Croatian inland.¹⁰

The roots of this perspective are located in Central Europe and are connected to the dissident and émigré circles that are the topic of this article. From the 1960s onwards, within German academia, but also in political and intellectual circles, heated debates were held about the mental borders of Central and Eastern Europe, and more

4 Pierre Bourdieu, *La distinction: Critique sociale du jugement* [*Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*] (Paris: Minuit, 1979); *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993).

5 See Edward Soja, 'Vom "Zeitgeist" zum "Raumgeist": New Twists on the Spatial Turn', in *Spatial Turn: Das Raumparadigma in den Kulturwissenschaften*, ed. by Jörg Döring and Tristan Thieleman (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2008), pp. 241–62.

6 See Edward Soja, *Seeking Spatial Justice* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010).

7 See Soja's prologue to *Seeking Spatial Justice*.

8 Frithjof Benjamin Schenk, 'Mental maps: Die Konstruktion von Geographischen Räumen in Europa seit der Aufklärung' ['Mental Maps: The Construction of Geographical Space in Europe since the Enlightenment'], *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* [*History and Society*], no. 28 (2002), 493–514; Stefan Troebst, '“Intermarium” and “Wedding to the Sea”: Politics of History and Mental Mapping in East Central Europe', *European Review of History*, no. 10 (2003), 293–322; Iver B. Neumann, *Uses of the Other: 'The East' in European Identity Formation* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998); Hans Lemberg, 'Zur Entstehung des Osteuropabegriffs im 19. Jahrhundert' ['The Origins of the Idea of Eastern Europe in the Nineteenth Century'], *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, no. 33 (1985), 48–91.

9 Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994).

10 Larry Wolff, *Venice and the Slavs: The Discovery of Dalmatia in the Age of Enlightenment* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001).

particularly about Germany's position in Europe. This political reading of geographical concepts probably also connects to older traditions of cartography and geography in Germany.¹¹ Karl Schlögel's work also has roots in these academic traditions, more particularly in the rediscovery of the concept of Central Europe in the 1980s.¹² Soja's postmodern spatial thought shares the emancipatory agenda with the cartographical or mental mapping spatial traditions. Revealing hidden power relations or undoing historical injustice vis-à-vis peoples, nations, or regions underlies most history writing from this particular strand of spatial thought, including Schlögel's.

However, the spatial turn can and should be approached primarily as a research innovation. Spatial thought adds a number of valuable observations to the study of periodicals and of European identity. Particularly its normative dimension — which does not necessarily imply an emancipatory dimension — generates new understandings. The periodical is not a purely physical object, but also a mental space that is marked by hierarchies and processes of inclusion and exclusion. Common and accepted theories in the study of periodicals such as the periodical as a 'circle' are closely related to a spatial reading, but differ as 'cultural capital' differs from 'spatial capital'. Much like public transport in Los Angeles creates a space that entails cultural, social, and economic inequalities, the periodical cannot be narrowed down to exclusively intellectual or socio-economic relations. The periodical is a physical and mental space that produces relations and meanings.

European Cultural Spaces

The relevance of this perspective is best demonstrated in attempts at analysing the development of ideas about Europe and European identities. The existing literature on Europe as an idea generally collects individual articulations and places them in a long discursive chronology. This often falsely suggests that these articulations all comment or build on each other. The European public sphere differs from the national public sphere in the sense that the European public sphere does not revolve around a defined political centre. Often there are contingent, incidental or geographically unrelated moments of crisis (wars, revolutions) that trigger new articulations.¹³ From the Cold War era, the Hungarian Uprising, student protests in 1968, or the rise of Solidarność in Poland are among the prime examples: although all in a Central European Cold War context, the discourses behind these are fairly disconnected from each other. Therefore, this article uses the concept of European cultural spaces to challenge the concept of a homogenous European public sphere.

A good attempt at avoiding the concept of a homogenous public sphere was presented by Kiran Klaus Patel and Veronika Lipphardt who proposed to reconstruct not only ideas about Europe, but also the practices that produced these ideas and stages

11 Hans-Dietrich Schultz and Wolfgang Natter, 'Imagining Mitteleuropa: Conceptualisations of "Its" Space In and Outside German Geography', *European Review of History*, no. 10 (2003), 273–92.

12 Karl Schlögel, *Die Mitte liegt ostwärts: Die Deutschen, der verlorene Osten und Mitteleuropa* [*The Centre Lies to the East: The Germans, the Lost East, and Central Europe*] (Berlin: Siedler, 1986).

13 *Europäische Öffentlichkeit: Transnationale Kommunikation seit dem 18. Jahrhundert* [*European Public Sphere: Transnational Communication since the Eighteenth Century*], ed. by Jörg Requate and Martin Schulze Wessel (Frankfurt: Campus 2002). See also *Journal of European Integration History*, no. 8 (2002); and *Transnationale Öffentlichkeiten und Identitäten im 20. Jahrhundert* [*Transnational Public Spheres and Identities in the Twentieth Century*], ed. by Hartmut Kaelble, Martin Kirsch, and Alexander Schmidt-Gernig (Frankfurt: Campus, 2002).

on which they were articulated.¹⁴ European cultural spaces can be defined as the sum of these practices and stages. In that context, the ideas about Europe cannot be traced back to one space, but are the result of activities in ‘parallel spaces’, that do not automatically overlap or connect on a geographical and social level. For example, the discourse of the early European political cooperation during the late 1950s and 1960s is only limitedly connected to the idealist federalists from the Second World War, or with the radical students’ movements in the 1960s, despite their explicit common European language.

This fragmentation of the European public sphere makes the European discourse contingent, but Europeanisation can be triggered by moments of crisis. Transnational moments of change such as wars and revolutions may cause parallel spaces of European discourse to connect and merge. Hence, this Europeanisation, understood as a process of homogenisation, or less radically, as a process of increasing interconnectedness in Europe, is not solely triggered by European ideals.¹⁵ Émigré and dissident periodicals are prime examples of these parallel, often marginal or isolated European spaces that became a factor of major influence after external forces triggered connections.¹⁶ Towards the end of the Cold War these periodicals were both subject to processes of Europeanization *and* engines of the Europeanisation of Europe.

Émigré Periodicals

The migration of intellectuals from Central and Eastern Europe resulted in a wide range of émigré periodicals in the West. Influential hubs of émigré culture emerged above all in Paris, London, and Munich, but also in Vienna, New York, and Toronto.¹⁷ Arguably the best-known émigré periodical is the Polish *Kultura* (Paris). Other prime examples include the Polish *Wiadomości* (London), *Polska w Europie* (London), the Czech *Svědectví* (New York and later Paris), *Listy* (Rome), and the Hungarian *Irodalmi Újság* (Vienna). Most periodicals emerged in the direct aftermath of migration and kept drawing their identity from this starting point. The first migration wave followed the introduction of communism in Central and Eastern Europe (1945–49), with a second important wave in reaction to the Hungarian Uprising (1956). In this early phase of communism, many contributions to the periodicals were focused on reclaiming the intellectual and moral right to the nation and the national culture. Particularly in countries that were politically divided or housed strong popular support for the communist party (such as Czechoslovakia), this was not an easy task. Later groups, after the arrival of Warsaw Pact troops in Czechoslovakia (1968), and after the workers protests in Poland had been halted, did not have to engage in this and could concentrate on representing growing resistance at home.

14 Kiran Klaus Patel and Veronika Lipphardt, ‘Einleitung’, in *Der Europäer — Ein Konstrukt: Wissenbestände, Diskurse, Praktiken* [*The European — A Construct: Knowledge, Discourses, Practices*], ed. by Lorraine Bluche, Veronika Lipphardt, and Kiran Klaus Patel (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2009), pp. 7–32 (p. 17).

15 ‘Europeanization’ is as theoretical concept largely terra incognita in the humanities. The political sciences have explored the concepts widely since the 1990s. See, for instance, Ulrike von Hirschhausen and Kiran Klaus Patel, ‘Europeanization in History: An Introduction’, in *Europeanization in the Twentieth Century: Historical Approaches*, ed. by Martin Conway and Kiran Klaus Patel (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 1–18 (p. 3–7).

16 Jessica Wardhaugh, Ruth Leiserowitz, and Christian Bailey, ‘Intellectual Dissidents and the Construction of European Spaces, 1918–1988’, in *Europeanization in the Twentieth Century*, ed. by Conway and Patel, pp. 21–43.

17 For an overview of twentieth-century migration developments from Eastern Europe, see John Neubauer, ‘Exile: Home of the Twentieth Century’, in *The Exile and Return of Writers from Eastern Europe*, ed. by John Neubauer and Borbála Zsuzsanna Török (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2009), pp. 4–103.

Kultura's first issue (1947) opened with translations from Benedetto Croce's and Paul Valéry's works ('The crisis of the mind', 1919).¹⁸ In the first postwar years, anti-communist emigrants from Eastern Europe explored the European idea. Emigrated Czechs, such as the former minister Hubert Ripka or former mayor of Prague Petr Zenkl, tried to resell the (alleged) European federalism of the pre-war Czechoslovak president.¹⁹ Others used Radio Free Europe in their battles against communism. The explicit references to Europe in the émigré discourse dropped both in frequency and in force during the 1960s and 1970s, but returned stronger than ever in the émigré periodicals in the 1980s. The rebirth of the European idea coincided with the return of Central Europe as a political and cultural concept and with the appreciation of solidarity between anti-communists in the East and West.

Émigré periodicals were not only the engine of the European idea, they also facilitated and pushed the transfer of ideas during the Cold War. Many periodicals included translated works from the West, or evergreens from their own national traditions. From the 1970s, *Kultura*, *Svědectví*, or *Listy* became stages and sources of knowledge for dissidents in the East. Manuscripts were smuggled across the border, printed, and in some cases these editions found their way back to the home countries. The émigré periodical was a window on the West, a source of communication with migrants, and, albeit much more limitedly, also a platform for dissidents.

The émigré periodicals have been referred to as a 'symbolic structure' or as a 'text' because of their function as crossroads.²⁰ The European idea was a central theme in that text. The initial rift between émigré periodicals and their home front wasn't vanquished until the 1970s. This rapprochement was then accompanied by a new interest in the European idea among emigrants.²¹ Now the attention to the European idea gave way to the revival of the concept of Central Europe. Émigré periodicals played a prominent role in this revival.

Kultura* and *Svědectví

The monthly periodical *Kultura* was supervised from the very first to its final issue by Jerzy Giedroyc (1906–2000). Although Giedroyc was the sole editor, a circle of likeminded intellectuals formed around him, with artists of standing such as Józef Czapski, Czesław Miłosz, and Witold Gombrowicz. Estimates say that some 1,600 of the 10,000 monthly copies reached Polish soil.²² The efforts that the authorities in

18 See also Andrzej Stanisław Kowalczyk, 'Jerzy Giedroyc's *Kultura* und die Krise der Europäischen Identität' ['Jerzy Giedroyc's *Kultura* and the Crisis of European Identity'], in *Die polnische Emigration und Europa 1945–1990* [*Polish Emigration and Europe 1945–1990*], ed. by Łukasz Gałęcki and Basil Kerski (Osnabrück: Fibre Verlag, 2000), pp. 73–93 (p. 74); Włodzimierz Bolecki, '*Kultura* (1946–2000)', in *The Exile and Return of Writers from Eastern Europe*, ed. by Neubauer and Zsuzsanna Török, pp. 146–88.

19 Vladimír Goněc, 'Hubert Ripka und das Europadenken im Exil in den fünfziger Jahren' ['Hubert Ripka and the Ideas about Europe in Exile during the 1950s'], in *Europa im Ostblock*, ed. by Gulińska-Jurgiel, Faraldo and Domnitz, pp. 371–87. See also Józef Łaptos, 'Visionen des gemeinsamen Europas: Die ostmitteleuropäische Emigration zu Beginn des Kalten Krieges' ['Visions of a Collective Europe: The East-Central European Emigration at the Beginning of the Cold War'], in *Europa im Ostblock*, ed. by Gulińska-Jurgiel, Faraldo and Domnitz, pp. 317–40.

20 Neil Stewart, '"We don't want an émigré journal": Pavel Tigrid and *Svědectví*', in *The Exile and Return of Writers from Eastern Europe*, ed. by Neubauer and Török, pp. 242–75 (p. 242).

21 Jan C. Behrend and Friederike Kind, 'Vom Untergrund in den Westen: Samizdat, Tamizdat und die Neuerfindung Mitteleuropas in den Achtzigerjahren' ['From the Underground to the West: Samizdat, Tamizdat, and the Re-invention of Central Europe in the 1980s'], *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* [*Archive for Social History*], no. 45 (2005), 427–48 (p. 434).

22 Thomas Lane and Marian Wolański, *Poland and European Integration: The Ideas and Movements of Polish Exiles in the West, 1939–91* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p. 203.

communist Poland went through to prevent the periodical from entering the country suggest that the periodical was a major influence on Polish dissidence.

Kultura did not have a coherent ideological programme, but the periodical operated from an explicit European agenda, with an ethnic-national bias. Particularly in the early years, *Kultura* was much concerned with the European idea. Its European references were attempts at attributing a deeper meaning to Polish exile. In this way, the new Polish emigrants were not simply the result of failing Polish statehood, but living proof of a deeper European, or perhaps even Western European crisis. For example, parallel to the emergence of the European Community for Coal and Steel, *Kultura* published a 'democratic manifesto' and even a call for a 'United States of Europe'.

Nationally, the periodical built on the remnants of the old Jagiellonian tradition that promoted the idea of a multinational, eastward-looking Poland.²³ Although the periodical opened its pages to European and Central European unity and integration, its central line of argumentation shifted subtly from the 1970s onwards to reconciliation and rapprochement between the East and the West. A good example was that *Kultura* no longer revisited the Polish expansion, or sense of responsibility, towards the East, but now supported much more open attitudes towards Germany. Paradigmatic 'reconciling' articles that were published included Jan Józef Lipski's 'Two Fatherlands, Two Patriotisms'.²⁴

Despite these developments, in the 1980s Giedroyc revisited *Kultura's* mission 'to stress the role and meaning of Poland in the East'. To be sure, he added that this was not to be mistaken for expansion, but seen as an attempt at resolving old conflicts about the Polish-Lithuanian Vilnius (Wilno) and the Polish-Ukrainian L'viv (Lwów).²⁵ Both cities played a central role in Polish history, but had ended up outside Polish borders after World War Two. Publicist Juliusz Mieroszewski (1906–76) was, together with Giedroyc, the most important initiator of these new connections with Lithuania, Belarus, and Ukraine.²⁶ The current Polish preoccupation with Ukraine and Belarus is often traced back to its revival on the pages of *Kultura*.²⁷

Although *Kultura* was strongly anti-communist, it remained marginally positive about Russia and the Russian culture. Giedroyc supported Russian emigrants and even compiled three Russian issues over the years (1960, 1971, and 1981). Nevertheless, its connections with neighbouring countries were indisputably stronger. A Czech issue appeared in 1969 and a German one in 1984.²⁸ As a concept, Central Europe never really found its way to *Kultura*, unlike its Czech or Hungarian counterparts, but the periodical was very explicit in its demarcation of Central European solidarity.

Central Europe was prominently visible in *Svědectví*. *Svědectví* had its first editions in New York, but relocated to Paris, which remained its headquarters until 1989. Pavel Tigríd (1917–2003) was to *Svědectví* what Giedroyc was to *Kultura*. Tigríd was a young catholic periodicalist who had escaped Czechoslovakia shortly after the communist party took over. At the end of his life, he was one of the anchoring points of the Czech national conscience during the post-communist transition. For a short while

23 Andrzej Friszke, 'Polen und Europa: Der Einfluss der Pariser *Kultura* auf das politische Denken' ['Poland and Europe: The Influence of Parisian *Kultura* on Political Thought'], in *Die polnische Emigration und Europa 1945–1990*, ed. by Galecki and Kerski, pp. 35–57 (p. 39–40).

24 Jan Józef Lipski, 'Dwie ojczyzny — Dwa patriotyzmy: Uwagi o megalomanii narodowej i ksenofobii Polaków' ['Two Motherlands — Two Patriotisms: Remarks on the National Megalomania and Xenophobia of Polish People'], *Kultura*, no. 10 (1981), 3–29.

25 In a conversation with an employee: Friszke, p. 52.

26 For Lipski's and Mieroszewski's articles, see *Between East and West: Writings from Kultura*, ed. by Robert Kostrzewa (New York: Hill and Wang, 1990).

27 See, for example, Timothy Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations: Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, 1569–1999* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), pp. 226–31.

28 Włodzimierz Bolecki, p. 180.

he even served as a Minister of Culture (1994–96) and advisor to President Havel. His moral capital was rooted mainly in his role in *Svědectví*. Immediately after his emigration he was active in the Czechoslovak section of Radio Free Europe and, from the United States, he wrote for *Voice of America*. *Svědectví* saw the light of day in 1956, the year of the Hungarian Uprising. The suggested solidarity now seems self-evident, but stood against a background of long historical animosity between Hungarians, Czechs, and Slovaks at the time.

Svědectví's first edition opened with a 'salute to Poland and Hungary', and with an affirmation that the Hungarian Uprising was not directed 'against socialism, but against the country that had betrayed socialism'.²⁹ This position and tone was representative for Tigríd. Also in 1980–81, his main advice to his Polish friends was that they needed a strong communist party to guide the revolt against the regime to a desirable outcome.³⁰ This was most likely a result of the fear of escalation that dominated the region and the West. The Central European discourse that eventually emerged in the periodical was far from self-evident in the 1950s.

Kultura and *Svědectví* can be read as attempts at defining the canon of Polish and Czech tradition, culture, and loyalties. They were an answer both to the need for a common identity among emigrants in the West, and to communist parties in the East appropriating Polish and Czech history. *Svědectví* printed articles from and about the pre-war president Masaryk and likeminded politicians and intellectuals, and offered space to legendary and controversial (to communists) writers and artists such as René Wellek (1903–95) or Karel Teige (1900–51). Teige's case was telling. He was a designer and theoretician of art with explicit left-wing and communist convictions who could easily have been discarded from the Czech national pantheon. Conversely, he turned out to be the ideal case for *Svědectví* to separate the good socialists from the bad, 'non-Czech' socialists. Before the war, Teige had opted for the internationalist, avant-garde wing of Czech communism of which the dominant strands were rapidly moving towards Stalinism. His manifesto *Surrealism Against the Current* (1938) was seminal in that decision. Sections from this manifesto were reprinted in *Svědectví*.³¹ Even the cover design carried the same message: Ladislav Sutnar, a famous Czech typographer and designer with similar ideological inclinations created it. In this way, banned Czechs were embraced, and a national canon was defined based on both conservative and progressive ideas. This was Tigríd's reconciling world view in action and it can also be understood as a side product of the small and isolated cultural spaces of the émigré community: they needed all the help they could get.

For a while, the entry ticket to these transnational European spaces of emigrants, dissidents, and Western European intellectuals was taking a stand in the debate about Central Europe. Milan Kundera's 'Tragedy of Central Europe', that was first published in France under the title 'Un occident kidnappé' and later reprinted in the *New York Review of Books*, was not only the beginning of this debate, but also remained its centre until well into the 1990s.³² In this polemic sermon, written primarily for a Western audience, he framed the countries that were controlled by Soviet dominance as a kidnapped

29 *Svědectví*, no. 1 (1956). Prior to the protests in Hungary there had also been tensions in Poland.

30 Pavel Tigríd, 'Dělnictvo ve východní Evropě' ['Workers in Eastern Europe'], *Svědectví*, no. 14 (1981), 657–84.

31 Karel Teige, *Surrealismus proti proudu* [*Surrealism Against the Current*] (Praha: Surrealistická skupina, 1938).

32 Milan Kundera, 'Un occident kidnappé ou la tragédie de l'Europe centrale' ['The Kidnapped West; or, The Tragedy of Central Europe'], *Le Débat*, no. 27 (1983), 1–22; Milan Kundera, 'The Tragedy of Central Europe', *New York Review of Books*, no. 31 (1984), 33–38. See also Carlos Reijnen, *Op de drempel van Europa: De Tsjechen en Europa in de twintigste eeuw* [*On the Threshold of Europe: The Czechs and Europe in the Twentieth Century*] (Kampen: Klement, 2005), pp. 295–306.

section of the West. He seemed to suggest that, as a result, these countries appreciated or cherished the European values more than Western Europe itself. The image of 'kidnapping' implied that Kundera did not consider Russia to be part of the West or Europe, despite having sympathies for parts of Russian literature. Although *Svědectví* had printed sections of Solzhenitsyn's or Pasternak's works, the question of Russia's relation to Europe and the extent to which communism could be seen as a continuation of Russian traditions became prominent in *Svědectví* as well. Many rejected Kundera's position by pointing to the fact that communism was mainly an export product of the West (Milan Šimečka).³³ A final answer to this question was never reached, despite the fact that *Svědectví* had made its own position clear by printing the work of Brodsky's, who had explicitly distanced himself from Kundera's misleading oppositions between 'East and West' and 'emotion and rationality'.³⁴

The importance of this debate about Central Europe stretches far beyond the somewhat provincial discussion about Russia's position. In a similar vein, the question if Central Europe should be considered a coherent historical culture in itself also attracted attention. Josef Kroutvor supported Kundera wholeheartedly, although he pointed out the hidden 'sadness' in Kundera's article (next to its 'truth' and 'knowledge').³⁵ Milan Hauner commented on Kundera's dramatic suggestion that in Central Europe people were still prepared to die for Europe: Hauner reminded of German Nazis during the Second World War who also perished with Europe on their minds.³⁶ Obviously, the debate was not limited to *Svědectví*. Many of the articles were reprinted elsewhere, often in multiple languages, provoking reactions from intellectuals from other countries as well. Among the most famous were Czesław Miłosz, György Konrád, Danilo Kiš, and Peter Bender.³⁷

The renaissance of European themes and rhetoric in the periodicals had two important driving forces. Firstly, dissident life in the East did not really emerge until the 1970s. In most cases, these dissidents had similar backgrounds as later generations of emigrants. For instance, in Czechoslovakia both dissidents and the vast group of emigrants had roots in the Prague Spring (1968), so they connected very well across Europe. Secondly, in Western Europe in the 1980s the European idea awoke from deep hibernation in the 1960s and early 1970s, in an attempt at finding a way out of the Cold War deadlock. For the United States and the Soviet Union, the Helsinki Accords (1975) were decisive. The power play between the two driving forces over recognition, security, and trade that initiated the negotiations in Helsinki offered some space for Europe to frame its own position, which mainly resulted in an additional human rights

33 Milan Šimečka, 'Jiná civilisace?' [Another Civilization?], *Svědectví*, no. 19 (1985), 350–56. The article also appeared in *Listy*, no. 6 (1984), 27–29.

34 For Brodsky's reaction to Kundera, see Joseph Brodsky, 'Why Milan Kundera Is Wrong about Dostoevsky', *Cross Currents*, no. 5 (1986), 477–84.

35 Josef Kroutvor [Josef K.], 'Střední Evropa: Torzo omílané historie' [Central Europe: Torso of Historic Recurrence], *Svědectví*, no. 16 (1981), 443–67.

36 Milan Hauner, 'Dopis redakci *The New York Review of Books*' [Letter to the Editors], *Svědectví*, no. 19 (1985), 356–59.

37 For good analyses of these discussions, see Gerard Delanty, 'The Resonance of Mitteleuropa: A Habsburg Myth or Antipolitics?', *Theory, Culture & Society*, no. 13 (1996), 93–108; Rudolf Jaworski, 'Die aktuelle Mitteleuropadiskussion in historischer Perspektive' [The Current Discussion about Central Europe from a Historical Perspective], *Historische Zeitschrift*, no. 247 (1988), 529–50; Tony Judt, 'The Rediscovery of Central Europe', *Daedalus*, no. 119 (1990), 23–54; Iver B. Neumann, 'Russia as Central Europe's Constituting Other', *East European Politics and Societies*, no. 7 (1996), 349–69; Jacques Rupnik, 'Central-Europe or Mitteleuropa?', *Daedalus*, no. 119 (1990), 249–78; George Schöpflin and Nancy Wood, eds, *In Search of Central Europe* (Totowa: Barnes & Noble, 1989); Martin Schulze Wessel, 'Die Mitte liegt westwärts: Mitteleuropa in tschechischer Diskussion' [The Centre Lies to the West: Central-Europe in Czech Discourse], *Bohemia*, no. 29 (1988), 325–44; Klara Lutsky, 'Kundera's Reception in the West', in *Literature in Exile of East and Central Europe*, ed. by Agnieszka Gutthy (New York: Peter Lang, 2009); Behrend and Kind, p. 434.

agenda. This turned out to be the starting point for a new European self-awareness *and* a point of reference for dissidents.³⁸ After the accords, American nuclear presence in Europe was criticised and intellectuals started opting for a ‘third way’ in the Cold War.³⁹

The debate about Central Europe had a strong ritual function. Writing about Central Europe implied testifying to European culture. Despite conflicting positions, contributions served to a certain extent as a rite of passage for the community of European intellectuals. The periodicals and debates built biographies and careers. Jiří Pelikán, the front man of *Svědectví*’s Italian variant *Listy* serves as a good example.⁴⁰ *Listy* was a product of the Prague Spring. Pelikán’s life and career underpin the hypothesis that émigré circles and their periodicals developed into European cultural spaces that, in the 1980s, emerged from anonymity through transnational engagement with the Central European and European idea. Pelikán had a history in the Czech communist party and, as a director of Czech Television, played a crucial role during the Prague Spring. During his exile in Rome, he started *Listy*, a periodical central to the international émigré community. Via these circles, Pelikán entered the Italian socialist party, for which he served in European Parliament for two terms. The émigré networks brought him to the forefront of the European idea.

The European Market: *Kontinent*

Emigrants were decisive links between dissidents at home and likeminded people in East and West. Their periodicals were important bridges between eras and regions, though their audiences were largely determined by the languages that were used. A fair number of periodicals attempted at reaching wider audiences. From the second half of the 1970s, an intellectual market for East-West exchange developed in Western Europe and the United States.⁴¹ In France *Les Cahiers de l’Est* (1975–79), *L’autre Europe* (1984), *La nouvelle alternative* (1979–98), and particularly *Lettre internationale* (1984–93) started appearing. The latter periodical was established by the Czech émigré writer Antonín J. Liehm, who had been one of the intellectual engines in the Czechoslovak Prague Spring movement in the 1960s. *Lettre internationale* was a truly transnational stage because it also appeared in German, Italian, Spanish, and later also in Hungarian and Romanian editions. Particularly since these periodicals did not exclusively deal with Central and Eastern Europe, they implicitly revealed which discourses were interconnected. In Germany, *Kursbuch* (1965–2008), which dealt with East European affairs extensively, was an example of a periodical that was able to connect discourses. *Kursbuch* was initiated by two paradigmatic intellectuals from the ’68 generation, Hans Magnus Enzensberger and Karl Markus Michel. With that connection, the East-West theme and the East European dissidents were directly connected to the future of socialism in the West.

A slightly different category was formed by the periodicals that were entirely dedicated to publishing translated East European sources. Although they did not fit as well into this analysis of transnational cultural spaces, they did function as breeding grounds for the authors who published in the émigré periodicals. In some cases, articles

38 Daniel C. Thomas, *The Helsinki Effect: International Norms, Human Rights, and the Demise of Communism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Filip Bloem, *Bedachtzame Revolutionairen: Oost-Duitse en Tjechische oppositiebewegingen, 1975–1990* [*Thoughtful Revolutionaries: East-German and Czech Opposition Movements, 1975–1990*] (Leiden: Proefschrift Universiteit Leiden, 2010), pp. 99–130.

39 For the ‘third (European) way’, see Peter Bender, *Das Ende des ideologischen Zeitalters: Die Europäisierung Europas* [*The End of the Ideological Era: The Europeanization of Europe*] (Berlin: Severin und Siedler, 1981); Jeffrey Herf, *War by Other Means: Soviet Power, West German Resistance, and the Battle of the Euromissiles* (New York: Free Press, 1991).

40 On *Listy*, see Dušan Havlíček, *Listy v exilu* [*Listy in Exile*] (Olomouc: Burian a Tichák, 2008).

41 Behrend and Kind, p. 434.

were direct copies, such as from *Index on Censorship* (1972), a periodical that was started by two dissidents in London, but widened its initial East European scope to dictatorships across the globe. On a smaller scale and even more politicised, a vast number of periodicals or leaflets about East European affairs appeared throughout the West, such as the socialist *Osteuropa-info* in Germany or *Gegenstimmen* in Austria.⁴² In the United States, *Cross Currents* offered a broad range of essays and literary texts, larded with academic work from academics from Central and East European descent. Although these publications were aiming at a Western audience, they sometimes also reached Central Europeans, because French, German, or English were increasingly used as pivot languages between dissidents and emigrants.

Kontinent is a periodical that combined many of the above characteristics. It was both a classic émigré forum and a direct bridge to Western European and Northern American audiences. It was launched in 1974 by the Russian writer Wladimir Maximow, who had moved to Paris that year. In Germany, *Kontinent* was eagerly accepted by Ullstein Verlag, part of the Axel Springer group, resulting in a very successful start with 30,000 copies of its first German issue and with Springer being personally involved. This intellectual and financial background was crucial for its success and its contents. Springer was a conservative force in the German media landscape and had clashed with left-wing intellectuals from the '68 generation. This framed *Kontinent* as an ideologically driven, anti-communist periodical, and a personal revenge of Springer against left-wing groups in Germany that had repeatedly flirted with the communist East.⁴³ Günter Grass published a letter in *Die Zeit* to Solzhenitsyn and Sinjavski, pointing at Springer's personal war history and questioning if it would be wise to scare away the 'kommunistischen Teufel' ['communist devil'] with an 'antifaschistischen Beelzebub'.⁴⁴

Even with this context, *Kontinent* was not solely a German-Russian experiment. Eventually it was published in ten different language editions: parallel to the dominant German, French, and English editions, there were also short-lived Italian, Spanish, Greek, and Dutch editions. The editorial boards fragmented, causing not all editions to be equal. Maximow even expressed his concern over the German edition, and *Le Figaro* published a plea to end the German edition.

Up until his emigration to Paris in 1974, Maximow himself had been rather exclusively oriented towards Russian literature, and had played a role in the Union of Soviet Writers. After his excommunication from the party, he had allegedly been forced to spend time in a psychiatric hospital. His publishing activities were then limited to Western Europe and soon Maximow decided to leave the Soviet Union.

Maximow's initial ideas about *Kontinent* favoured a periodical built around Russian prose and poetry. As an exiled intellectual however, he depended on the resources and knowledge of others. In Germany, Springer contributed and in Paris he developed good relations with Giedroyc from *Kultura*. Opening up towards Central and Eastern European seemed like an obvious move. Much like in *Kultura*, *Svědectví*, and *Listy*, the Russian-Eastern European connection did not have strong traditions but emerged

42 Stefan Troebst, 'Die ostmitteleuropäischen Oppositionsbewegungen in der westlichen Osteuropaforschung 1975–1989: Drei Skizzen' ['The East-Central European Opposition Movements in Western East European Studies 1975–1989: Three Sketches'], in *Wechselwirkungen Ost-West: Dissidenz, Opposition und Zivilgesellschaft 1975–1989 [East-West Interactions: Dissidence, Opposition, and Civil Society 1975–1989]*, ed. by Hans Joachim Veen, Ulrich Mählert, and Peter März (Köln: Böhlau, 2007), pp. 173–82 (pp. 176–77).

43 Gerd Koenen, *Das rote Jahrzehnt: Unsere kleine deutsche Kulturrevolution, 1967–1977 [The Red Decade: Our Small German Cultural Revolution, 1967–1977]* (Köln: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 2001).

44 'Wer relativiert hier wen? Die Zeitschrift *Kontinent* als Springers Waffe gegen Böll und Grass' ['Who Relativizes Whom? The Periodical *Kontinent* as Springer's Weapon against Böll and Grass'], *Die Zeit*, no. 50 (1974). See also Kind-Kovács, p. 274.

rather quickly, largely due to strategic considerations. In 1974, Solzhenitsyn expressed his appreciation in *Kontinent* for the new Eastern European alliance that had been impossible for decades.⁴⁵

The underlying tensions between Russia and Eastern Europe were still tangible in the first edition. After opening statements by Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov, followed a letter to the board from the French-Rumanian Eugène Ionesco, who pointed to the French self-deception with regard to socialism.⁴⁶ The Central and Eastern Europeans were included further on in the volume. After short articles by Luděk Pachman and Ota Filip about the Prague Spring, a section by the Hungarian cardinal Mindszenty was included. A central document in the volume was the letter to the editor of the board about Solzhenitsyn's famous 'Letter to Soviet Leaders'.⁴⁷ It was Solzhenitsyn's patriotism that caused concern in Eastern Europe. Despite this slow start, the Russian-Eastern European alliance was embraced more and more, and even special editions were launched, such as a volume about Prague.⁴⁸ In 1979, the German subtitle was changed into *Forum für Ost-West Fragen*, indicating that the initial goal of providing space for authors who were censored, gradually shifted towards a more political agenda.

Kontinent's intellectual contribution was its attempt at introducing a 'continental' definition of European culture, with a much more explicit rapprochement between Eastern Europe and Russia than in other émigré periodicals. This definition emerged from the notion of cultural kinship between East (including Russia) and West. *Kontinent* offered the possibility of joining all anti-communists and tried to challenge the mental East-West divide. The daily reality of the periodical, including its financial situation, the potential audience, the dependence on the Russian editors and the geographical archipelago of editions resulted in the Russian project reinventing itself by invoking cultural connections rooted in a continental definition of Europe. *Kontinent*, like other émigré periodicals operated according to the cultural space in which it found itself, and contributed to the redefinition of the borders of that space.

The Periodical as Crime Scene of the European Ideal

In the first issue of *Kontinent*, Maximow referred to the 'book' as the '*corpus delicti*, evidence of guilt, crime, and justification for punishment' of critical intellectuals.⁴⁹ If Maximow was right, the periodical — and the cultural space it represents — can be seen as the crime scene of the European ideal. The ambitious and new continental definition of Europe that arose from both Maximow's *Kontinent* and Gorbachev's notion of the 'European house', proved an unachievable ideal. The artificial character of these temporary intellectual coalitions of dissidents in *Kontinent* was revealed when the periodical returned to Moscow in 1990 and rediscovered its exclusively Russian roots.

Like *Kontinent*, *Listy* also migrated to its native soil, where it still exists. *Svědectví* also relocated to Prague, but was discontinued in 1992. *Kultura* continued to exist until Giedroyc's death in 2000. The European ideas that they produced turned out to be more durable than the periodicals themselves. Their vision of a common Europe was a direct result of the isolation of the émigré circles. For émigré periodicals, the European

45 Quoted from the Dutch edition: Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, 'Een woord ten geleide' ['Introduction'], *Kontinent*, no. 1 (1975), 9–11 (p. 9).

46 Quoted from the Dutch edition: Eugène Ionesco, 'Brief aan de Redactie' ['Letter to the Editors'], *Kontinent*, no. 1 (1975), 12–14.

47 'Wie wir Solzhenitsyns "Brief an die Sowjetführung" verstehen' ['How We Understand Solzhenitsyn's "Letter to the Soviet Leaders"'], *Kontinent*, no. 1 (1974), 236–49.

48 *Kontinent: Sonderband Prag* [*Kontinent: Special Prague Edition*] (Darmstadt: Kontinent, 1976).

49 'Unsere Aufgabe' ['Our Task'], *Kontinent*, no. 1 (1974), 3–4 (p. 3).

attitude was an intellectual challenge, but primarily a practical necessity. The Central European idea became a dominant topic when communication between East and West and among dissidents increased through émigré periodicals. These European ideas should therefore not be understood as the product of individual seclusion of determined intellectuals, but as the result of the physical and intellectual spaces of émigré circles, in particular periodicals.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall, these relatively marginal European cultural spaces became dominant environments for a short while. Intellectuals who had explored the European and Central European idea for one or two decades in an attempt to survive intellectually or even physically, became the specialists on questions that were asked throughout Europe. Laureates of important European literary and peace prizes such as György Konrád and Václav Havel became oracles of European integration. The Central European theme faded away rather rapidly, but the appreciation of Europe as a cultural and historical unity that has political implications lasted longer, well into the 2000s. It belongs to the paradoxes of European integration that the European idea thrives on the inability to express those ideas. Marginal European cultural spaces harvest most of these ideas.

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