I

Introduction: Geography of Internationalism

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In 2007, the National Museum in Warsaw exhibited the part of its collection from the years 1945–55.[1] Next to creations by Tadeusz Kantor à la Picasso or abstract paintings by Jerzy Nowosielski, the exhibition showed foreign paintings that the museum had bought at the time, notably Italian and French socialist realism, but interestingly no Soviet art. A painting by Renato Guttuso from Rome and one by Andrzej Wróblewski from Kraków were displayed side by side. Also on display were a still life by André Fougeron, which the National Museum purchased after its exhibition in Warsaw in 1952, and another still life by Zygmunt Radnicki. The exhibition revealed that socialist realism from Western countries, such as Italy and France, may have been more influential than socialist realism from the USSR.[2] The question of defining Europe emerged as a consequence—it was no longer a question concerning the geography of the single countries within Europe, but

1 Katarzyna Nowakowska-Sito, *Galeria sztuki XX wieku. Odsłony Kolekcji 1945–1955* (Warsaw: Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie, 2007).

2 Katarzyna Murawska-Muthesius, "How the West Corroborated Socialist Realism in the East: Fougeron, Taslitzky and Picasso in Warsaw," *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki* 2:65 (2003): 303–29.

the changing shape of the continent. More generally, it suggested a complex circulation of objects, persons and ideas, as well as transactions between East and West through the Iron Curtain. One issue is how we describe and refer to the frontier usually called the Iron Curtain: it could be successively porous or, on the contrary, impassable. In any case, the censorship that the actors endured and/or practiced in the socialist dictatorships did not mean that they were isolated inside their country. We have to understand the reality of the different frontiers created either by national boundaries or by the Iron Curtain. Like all frontiers, they were both an obstacle—for those stopped by them—and a resource—for those who could cross them, be it physically or mentally.

A visit to the exhibition in Warsaw was the starting point for the project that resulted in this collective volume. Most of the scholars are looking at art under socialism from a national perspective. But they constantly find clues about exchanges with other countries—exchanges with other people's democracies but also relationships with the Western democracies (with their official environments and the sympathizers of the communist cause). Very often, scholars intuitively feel that the problems they are tackling should be placed in a broader context so as to see the fuller picture. That is why this volume will not be yet another country-by-country presentation; instead, it will attempt to present a transnational history of arts. In 1995, in a provocative speech about art in the GDR, Martin Warnke wondered whether artists from a socialist republic had a broader experience of the world than their Western counterparts.[3] Whereas West German artists looked only to London and New York (the international scene can be very narrow), East German artists traveled and worked in Poland, Bulgaria, Moscow, Soviet Central Asia, Cuba, India, Italy, etc.

Questions about exchanges and spaces are also recurrent. Indeed, the part of Europe known as Central or Eastern Europe appears to be a privileged terrain of the geography of art and related reflections on frontiers, circulation and scales. This part of Europe proves to be an interesting observation point to investigate transfers, mimicries, impositions, transplants and rejections,

3 Martin Warnke, "Gibt es den DDR-Künstler?" in *Auf der Suche nach dem verlorenen Staat. Die Kunst der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der DDR*, ed. M. Flake (Berlin, Ars Nicolai, 1994), 40–47.

since the pioneering works of Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann.[4] These works teach us how to understand and historicize the operation that consists in associating a place and an artistic production (for instance, "Eastern European art," "Hungarian painting," "the Leipzig School"). They remind us that the identification and the labeling of works of art (as of persons) are constantly reshaped and depend on situational factors.

The geography of arts suggested different models, mainly based on the notion of influence. It dealt mainly with the question: where do the patterns appear and where are they reemployed? This option can only be regarded as inadequate, but it has seldom been criticized.[5] Behind the common notion of influence, the many interspaces that make any piece of art a unique item of knowledge simply disappear.[6] The panorama of art exchanges we map out in this volume is obviously far from exhaustive, but we have taken our cue from the realities of the various terrains taken into consideration and we do not aim to predispose any kind of archetypal map suggesting a crystalline explanation.

The very simple category of "Europe" needs to be called into question. As a matter of fact, the Iron Curtain constituted a convenient bipartition of the continent. The stability of the national borders after the Second World War helped to consolidate this static vision. However, in the postwar period, the destinies of some peripheral countries, such as Finland, Austria and Greece blurred a division that many would have taken for granted. The evolving of some socialist countries—not only Yugoslavia, Albania, and Romania—toward Moscow provides a more complex and changing picture. The notion of the "Soviet Bloc" seems less relevant today.[7] New alliances, some of them with China, Latin America or the Arab world, built unexpected bridges. The ideological war shifted from Europe to the Third World, to cultural contexts where "modern states" still had to be created, especially in Asia and Africa. Culture and the arts evolved along with economic interests. The bourgeois

4 Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, *Toward a Geography of Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004). It is worth mentioning another pioneering work on another geographical entity, the one by Dario Gamboni on Switzerland: Dario Gamboni, *La Géographie artistique* (Disentis: Desertina, 1987).

5 Piotr Piotrowski, "On the Spatial Turn or Horizontal Art History," *Umeni/Art* 5 (2008): 378–83. Jean-Marc Besse, "Approches spatiales dans l'histoire des sciences et des arts," *Espace géographique* 3 (2010): 211–24.

6 Françoise Bardon, *Petit Traité de picturologie* (Paris: EC Editions, 2000).

7 Justine Faure and Sandrine Kott, eds., *Le Bloc de l'Est en question* (Paris: Vingtième siècle, 2011).

democracies exported a postcolonial paternalism, whereas the communist countries endeavored to incorporate the independence struggles into a formal internationalist ideology. Indeed, Europe was no longer alone (if it ever was), and the division into two blocs appears today to be a valid but insufficient explanation of the global situation. Hence, the political and cultural geography of the continent was much more widely extended than the physical geography would suggest. How does one draw a map of the artistic exchanges when the realities are shifting and the borders constantly expanding?

Highlighting New Source Fields

The gaps in our factual knowledge about art under socialism are gradually being filled in, albeit unequally. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, several international exhibitions in Bonn, Berlin, Vienna and other places, not to mention national exhibitions, presented initial outputs.[8] A further step was the comparison of artistic creations from each country. Scholars may select one point of comparison: types of art (geometrical abstraction,[9] mail art,[10] performance,[11] conceptual art[12] and acoustic experiments[13]), groups of artists (Fluxus[14]) or notions (the notion of gender[15] and the notion of reality[16]). It is worth mentioning some comparative academic art historical studies as well.[17]

8 Ryszard Stanislawski, ed., *Europa, Europa. Das Jahrhundert der Avantgarde in Mittel- und Osteuropa* (Bonn: Stiftung Kunst und Kultur des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen, 1994). Matthias Flügge, ed., *Der Riss im Raum. Positionen der Kunst seit 1945 in Deutschland, Polen, der Slowakei und Tschechien* (Berlin: Guardini Stiftung, 1995). Lóránd Hegyi, ed., *Aspekte/Positionen. 50 Jahre Kunst aus Mitteleuropa, 1949–1999* (Vienna: Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig, 1999).

9 Ranier Fuchs and Lóránd Hegyi, *Reduktivismus. Abstraktion in Polen, der Tschechoslowakei, Ungarn, 1950–1980* (Vienna: Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig, 1992).

10 Kornelia von Berswordt-Wallrabe, Katrin Mrotzek, and Kornelia Röder, *Mail Art: Eastern Europe in International Network* (Schwerin and Budapest, 1996/1998).

11 Zdenka Badovinac, ed., *Body and the East: From the 1960s to the Present* (Cambridge, MA, and London: MIT Press, 1998).

12 "Conceptual Art Central Europe," *e-flux Journal* 40 (2012) and 41 (2013).

13 David Crowley, ed., *Sounding the Body Electric: Experiments in Art and Music in Eastern Europe, 1957–1984* (Lodz: Muzeum Stuki, 2012).

14 Petra Stegmann, ed., *Fluxus East. Fluxus-Netzwerke in Mittelosteuropa/Fluxus Networks in Central Eastern Europe*, exh. cat. (Berlin: Künstlerhaus Bethanien, 2007).

15 Bojana Pejic, ed., *Gender Check* (Vienna: Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig, 2009).

16 Project at the German Centre of Art History in Paris: *To Each His Own Reality: The Notion of Real in Art in France, West Germany, East Germany and Poland from the 1960s to the End of the 1980s*.

17 Maria Oriškova, *Zweistimmige Kunstgeschichte* (Vienna: Praesens Verlag, 2008); Piotr Piotrowski, *In the Shadow of Yalta: Art and the Avant-garde in Eastern Europe, 1945–1989* (London: Reaktion, 2009); Amy Bryzel, *Performing the East* (London: J. B. Tauris, 2013); Klara Kemp-Welch, *Antipolitics in Central Euro-*

Debates about these exhibitions and academic works give rise to critical approaches and methodological reflections on the geography of art. The main pointed problems are the creation of an "East" and a "West" and, consequently, the homogenization of each entity on the one hand, and the asymmetrical consideration of the Western and the Eastern part of Europe on the other. Consequently, academic discourse risks the repetition of the historical imbalance that has existed since early modern times.[18] Furthermore, art from the Western world may be considered, explicitly or implicitly, as a model. The main issue is clearly to find out how Eastern Europe appropriated what was created in the West. What was done in Eastern Europe is supposed to provide new answers to already existing questions, but not to formulate new questions. The result was an advantage for the creations of artists who were known in the West to the detriment of those who did not cross over from the Iron Curtain. The problem of appropriation reveals misleading similarities and corroborates Western eurocentrism. This is important in the case of avant-garde art, but even more so in the case of socialist realism. The issues around these images are so different from the Western canonical creations that they become invisible if they are judged in the light of art historical narratives.

Debates about methodology are linked with the problems concerning sources. Following the first academic works that were based on personal and sometimes vague memories, more recent studies have focused on the availability of sources and their critics; this volume gives many examples of new sources and illustrates the problems they may address.

The great diversity of sources, which art historians are most familiar with and which are the most easily accessible, is presented here: exhibition catalogs, gallery publications, published or unpublished writings of artists and art critics. Some of the writings and manifests written by avant-garde artists have already been translated into Western European languages and have led to many discussions.[19] To understand these sources, the contextualization of

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*pean Art (*London: J. B. Tauris, 2014); Jérôme Bazin, *Realisme et égalité. Une histoire sociale de l'art en RDA 1949–1989* (Dijon: Presses du reel, 2015).

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

19 Stanislawski, *Europa, Europa*. Laura Hoptman and Tomáš Pospiszyl, eds., *Primary Documents: A Sourcebook for Eastern and Central European Art since the 1950s* (New York: MIT Press, 2002). It is worth mentioning that Sven Spieker is currently working on the anthology on conceptual art in Eastern Europe.

the position of the author in the artistic field and an understanding of the function of these texts are required. One must therefore question the purpose of art criticism in the socialist world. What is the role of an art critic in a socialist regime? What is the function of a manifesto? How far do exhibition publications institutionalize art practices?

Many other interesting sources are also available for this period: party files, files of any administration in charge of art production and conservation, files of state securities and files of artists' unions, etc. These archives provide evidence of the control and repression that surrounded artistic activities; they also give a voice to the different actors involved and highlight unexpected and sometimes forgotten dimensions of the problem. Reports we can read were *espaces de parole*, where artists, party members, members of mass organizations or audiences could express, through stereotypical formal language, their point of view (including in the reports of state security apparatuses). Unfortunately, accessibility varies from one postcommunist country to the next—we know that the ways the different sources are presented and their accessibility today are symptomatic of the way in which the communist past is regarded in current liberal systems.[20]

As in the case of sources, works of art are sometimes difficult to access. The current trend is to return to the original works of art—a trend that we sincerely support with this volume. The works in question were surrounded by harsh political and ideological readings. Through attentive and detailed formal analysis, it is now possible to analyze their particular discourse and to point to the possible difference between what was said about them and what they actually portrayed; in other words, to highlight the discrepancy between the production and the reception of art.

Interviews with witnesses cannot be excluded, provided that scholars analyze the narratives and their reconstruction critically, since memories are inevitably altered by political and personal concerns. The fact that memories are shaped and reshaped is an issue that the many studies in oral history prove, but that art history still largely ignores. For instance, an artist who now works in certain foreign cities may have stronger memories of previous contact with these cities and no or fewer recollections of contact with other cities that may

20 Sonia Combe, ed., *Archives et histoire dans les sociétés postcommunistes* (Paris: La Découverte, 2009).

have played a greater role at the time of socialism. The actual geography of art can replace and erase the formerly experienced geography.

A central issue for our project regarding sources needs emphasis: that is the question of language. A wide range of European languages are relevant, from Belarusian to Slovenian, from Spanish to Romanian. It may be useful to recall a truism about the language that we use in this volume, English, since the vast majority of the actors involved did not think in that language (neither do most of the scholars participating in this project). It is important to remember the problems of translation, which were of course very controlled.[21] For instance, in the 1950s, if the word *antiformalism* was exported to every language and dominated the debate in every country, even though its definition may have differed from one language to another and may have recalled different intellectual traditions. The same goes for the crucial category of *partinost* in Russian, *partyjność* in Polish, *Parteilichkeit* in German, *prise de parti* in French (all being hard to translate into English).

It is extremely important to realize that language has been a crucial element in the definition of national identities since early modern times. And the process continued after 1945. Not until after the Second World War was the whole territory of the USSR, with its different republics, finally linguistically unified.[22] In many socialist republics, the second half of the twentieth century is the period when multilingualism (or at least mutual understanding) gradually disappeared. In Bulgaria, for example, the Bulgarian language is imposed on the entire population to the detriment, in particular, of the Turkish language. The decisions taken in 1984 to ban Turkish from the public sphere and to change Turkish names to Bulgarian ones accelerated and made more brutal a long and nonlinear process of assimilation which had begun at the start of the nineteenth century.[23] The Romanian case is also evocative and reminds us that languages are constantly being reinvented. In the 1950s, when Romania was still under Soviet authority, Slavic terms and speech sounds were inserted into Romanian. However, after 1965, when Ro-

21 Iona Popa, *Traduire sous contrainte, littérature et communisme, 1947–1989* (Paris: CNRS Editions, 2010).

22 Juliette Cadiot, Dominique Arel, and Larissa Zakharova, eds., *Cacophonies d'empire. Le gouvernement des langues dans l'Empire russe et l'Union soviétique* (Paris: CNRS Editions, 2010).

23 Nadège Ragaru, "Faire taire l'altérité. Police de la langue et mobilisations linguistiques au temps de l'assimilation forcée des Turcs de Bulgarie (1984–1989)," *Cultures et conflits*, 79–80 (Autumn 2010).

mania distanced itself from Moscow, Romanian was presented more as a Romance language. This evolved into a brutal policy of forcing Hungarian and German speakers from Transylvania to speak Romanian.

Besides the problem of national language, the postwar period brought the issue of the dominant international languages to the fore. In the socialist period, Russian—the language of the socialist revolution—was supposed to be the legitimate international language and was to be learned by all school pupils. But actual knowledge of this language was sometimes very weak and we do not know exactly to what extent Russian was the language of communication. Other dominant languages, such as German, English or French, were often preferred as a result of old intellectual traditions that remained strong and attractive (especially in the case of English) for the younger generation, too.

The linguistic problem concerned not only the official world, but also the artistic work of the avant-gardes. Not to mention abstractions, which attempted to establish a universal visual language beyond particular spoken languages, many creations from the 1960s onward dealt with language, notably conceptual art or mail art. The dominant language was first French in the 1950s; during the following decades it became mainly English, although the English of conceptual art is the expression of an ideal and does not exactly reflect the standard language. But it could be German, too, as in the case of the Slovenian punk group Laibach, the German name for Ljubljana. However, in this specific case, German was not used as a language of communication; instead, its provocative and ironic use recalled the German presence in this part of Europe. A foreign language, first French then English, was more than a vehicle; its use somehow constituted a confrontation.

The geography of art is therefore dependent on a geography of linguistic skills and thus relies on social stratification, since the ability to understand and speak foreign languages is socially unequally distributed.

Socialist Realism/Avant-gardes

The approach in this volume is original by simultaneously considering both socialist realism and modernism/"avant-garde" (or "neo-avant-garde"). It does not isolate the two from each other, as is often the case; instead, it looks

at how the different forms of art (each rendered in all its diversity and complexity) coexisted at the heart of communist movements.

Furthermore, questioning the origins of this historiographical division, as well as the political positioning associated with each art form, is not meaningless. Viewing the avant-gardes merely from the perspective of political dissidence is a relatively recent approach—a change that was evident, in particular, on the occasion of the auction held in 1988 by Sotheby's in Moscow, entitled "Russian Avant-Garde and Soviet Contemporary Art." "Avant-garde" was then dissociated from its ideological content and linked to a national reference, whereas the term "Soviet" merely recalled a period of time. This has been the Western interpretation of these phenomena. A year later, an informal art center opened in the squatter dwellings of Pushkinskaya-10 in Leningrad. Their understanding of "nonconformist" art was much broader and went beyond the strict exclusion of socialist realism.

The number of socialist realist paintings and the interest in this kind of art evolved from 1945 to 1989, on a nonlinear path and at different rhythms, depending on the country. After the Second World War, and even more so after the beginning of the Cold War, every communist country honored socialist realism, according to the term coined in the USSR in the 1930s; and this was also true of Western countries that had powerful communist parties such as Italy, France and Belgium. After Stalin's death, we observe different evolutions due to the various experiences of the de-Stalinization process. Socialist realism became marginal in some countries, especially Poland, but also in Czechoslovakia and Hungary. The shift in Poland, where the belief in the Thaw was stronger than anywhere else, is particularly striking: after an intense interest in socialist realism in the early 1950s, the country abandoned it entirely, in favor of abstraction that represented an art which exemplified de-Stalinization. Other countries, such as the GDR and Bulgaria, continued to defend socialist realism. Revivals of socialist realism can be observed in different situations, such as in Romania after the July Thesis of 1971, which ended the liberal period that Ceaușescu inaugurated in 1965.

The role of the Soviet Union as a model has to be discussed with reference to the general implications of its particular model. At the beginning of our period, communist leaders claimed that Soviet art was the only model; paint-

ings from the USSR were propagandistically shown throughout socialist Europe and presented as the model to imitate.[24] But the actual reception of this art needs to be examined, as we find in archives clues of skepticism toward Soviet art, which was blamed for concentrating too much on political leaders and for generally lacking creative innovation. It would be interesting to know how the few artists who were following the Soviet model were viewed by their colleagues and what price they paid for their complaisance toward the Soviets. Besides, what was shown outside the USSR was not necessarily approved inside the country, among Soviet painters.[25]

By the end of the 1950s, Soviet leaders had defined a new artistic role for the USSR. The importance of the Exhibition of Socialist Countries in Moscow in 1958 must be underlined,[26] not only because on this occasion Poland showed paintings that deviated from socialist realism, but also because the president of the Soviet artists' union, Sergey Gerasimov, declared that socialist realism had to be defined at an international level. He recognized that, besides the USSR, many countries had contributed since 1945 to developing socialist realism. This launched a new phase in the history of socialist realism (actually the third phase, after the first in the 1930s in the USSR, and the second after 1945). In this late phase, the Soviet authorities still observed what was happening in each popular democracy, but intervened more rarely. The Soviet artistic capitals, Moscow and Leningrad, then became less decision-making centers than platforms, where the different communist art worlds could meet. The USSR probably served a more important role as an international meeting place than as a place in which to develop artistic directives.

One of the crucial ideas that we would like to test in this volume can be formulated as follows: socialist realism was less a product decided in Moscow and then imposed upon every part of socialist Europe, than a progres-

24 Antoine Baudin, "'Why Is Soviet Painting Hidden from Us?' Zhdanov Art and Its International Relations and Fallout, 1947–53," in *Socialist Realism without Shores*, ed. Evgeny Dobrenko (Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 1997), 227–57.

25 Matthew Cullerne Bown, *Socialist Realist Painting* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998).

26 Susan E. Reid, "The Exhibition *Art of Socialist Countries*, Moscow 1958–9, and the Contemporary Style of Painting," in *Style and Socialism: Modernity and Material Culture in Post-War Eastern Europe*, ed. Susan E. Reid and David Crowley (Oxford: Berg, 2000), 101–32; Susan E. Reid, "Toward a New (Socialist) Realism: The Re-Engagement with Western Modernism in the Krushchev Thaw," in *Russian Art and the West: A Century of Dialogue in Painting, Architecture and the Decorative Arts*, ed. Rosalind P. Blakesley and Susan E. Reid (Dekalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2007), 217–39.

Figure 1.1., 1.2., and 1.3.
Triptych by the Belgian groups, Forces Murales and Métiers du Mur, *La marche au socialisme*, 1951, triptych, each 230×600 cm.
© Institut d'histoire ouvrière, économique et sociale, Fonds Forces Murales, Seraing.

sive construction resulting from exchanges within Europe. (We will test the idea for the period after 1945, but it may even be relevant for the 1930s.) This is why we intend to write the history of socialist realism from a transnational point of view.[27]

Having formulated the context, creations from satellite states will be taken into account, including the creations from Western countries, such as Italy,[28] Belgium[29] and France[30] where the Communist Party played an important role in intellectual and artistic circles.[31] In comparison with exported Soviet realism, which offered nothing more than an imitation of the Russian Wanderers (*Peredvizniki*) of the nineteenth century, socialist realism from Western Europe appeared more appealing for many reasons. Images from Western countries represented the capitalist world; consequently, they were allowed to depict violence, difficult struggles and political energy (and not merely a forced optimism). On an aesthetic level, they could offer visual solutions to the problems of geometrization of form that concerned so many artists. The popularity in the communist world of Renato Guttuso's paintings about the revolts of Sicilian peasants[32] at the end of the 1940s is significant in this sense. One painting, *Marsigliese Contadina* (1947), bought by the Museum of Fine Arts in Budapest, reveals a strong cubist influence, which displeased the political authorities, including the Italian Communist Party (Togliatti condemned this trend at the exhibition at Palazzo Re Enzo in Bologna in 1948.) Another painting, *Occupazione delle terre incolte in*

27 A first study in this sense concerns socialist realist novels: Michael Scriven and Dennis Tate, eds., *European Socialist Realismo* (Oxford: Berg, 1988).

28 Nicoletta Misler, *La via italiana al realismo. La politica culturale artistica del PCI dal 1944 al 1956* (Milan: Mazzotta, 1974); Anna Caterina Bellati, *Guttuso e i suoi contemporanei russi. Dal realismo sociale al realismo socialista* (Busto Arsizio: Museo della Arti–Palazzo Bandera, 1995).

29 About the group Forces Murales between 1947 and 1957 and the way their art addresses the two linguistic communities that Belgium includes, see Jacqueline Guisset and Camille Baillargeon, eds., *Forces murales. Un art manifeste* (Brussels: Mardaga, 2009).

30 Dominique Berthet, *Le PCF, la culture et l'art* (Paris: La Table ronde, 1990).

31 About England, where the Communist Party was less strong than in neighboring nations but where the artistic debates were also intense, see James Hyman, *The Battle for Realism: Figurative Art in Britain during the Cold War, 1945–1960* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001).

32 The movement to occupy agricultural lands followed the Gullo decrees, which authorized peasants to appropriate unused lands. The movements knew two waves of struggles, from 1946–47 and then from 1949–50. See Lara Pucci, "Terra Italia: The Peasant Subject as Site of National and Socialist Identities in the Work of Renato Guttuso and Giuseppe de Santis," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 71 (2008): 315–34.

Sicilia (1949), immediately bought by the Academy of Arts in East Berlin, offered a compartmentalization of forms and colors which satisfied everyone, probably because it found a third way between Stalinist realism and modernism (cubism, expressionism, Matisse's art, as well as abstraction). This painting, which managed to satisfy and retain the desire for formalization, was at the center of the exhibition that took place during the International Youth Festival in East Berlin in 1951. Such paintings built, in a manner of speaking, an antiformalist formalization. It is in any case undeniable that the artistic scenes to the east of the Iron Curtain observed and commented on (and also imitated when the conditions permitted) what was created in the communist artistic scenes to the west of the Iron Curtain. Similarly, the communist artists of the West found in the East supporters, buyers and interlocutors. We do not want to suggest a division between a fossilized socialist realism in the East and a creative socialist realism in the West—we rather believe it is more appropriate to consider the different creations together and to be mindful of the varied exchanges.

The contributions in this volume try to grasp the originality of socialist realism. The undeniable political solidarity of socialist realism with one or the other communist political system does not mean this art was merely vulgar propaganda. The contributors take on a comprehensive approach to this art and ask why artists, administrators or audiences took an interest in it. From the point of view of the partisans of socialist realism, the time of the avant-gardes was over, the art worlds that had supported artistic production so far (galleries, circles of bourgeois buyers and random state support) were out of date. The different avant-gardes, seen as art of the late bourgeoisie, did not respond to present challenges and the socialist transformation. They promoted only formal and aesthetic revolutions but did not question social imbalances, offering the bourgeoisie the superficial contestation it was ready to tolerate. This explains the hostile discourse against the avant-garde, which varied from aggressive hatred to simple disinterest. Nevertheless, in many socialist realist paintings, we notice quotations from classical avant-gardes (impressionism, cubism, expressionism and surrealism, etc.) of which most of the socialist realist artists were still aware. It is difficult to understand the purpose of these quotations and hybridizations; they may be an attempt to tame modernism or the reemergence of retained modernism.

Socialist realism was therefore supposed to build a countermodernity and be a modern art (but not a modernist one). This modernity consisted not so much in the invention of new forms (socialist realism had to be simple); it was more the involvement of many actors who did not belong to art worlds: the party, mass organizations and the different faces of the working class. This art had to relate to the working class (and no longer be avant-garde). How was one to pay homage to workers and "their" party, which were supposed to be made up of the new rulers and therefore also the art patrons? One essential point was indeed the link with the working class, which cannot be underestimated. The recurrent displacements were a feature of socialist realist production. Artists left artistic centers (either temporarily or permanently) and went to suburban areas or isolated cities. Andrzej Wróblewski left the bourgeois Krakow to observe the construction of Nowa Huta. Viktor Popkov left Moscow to visit the construction sites of Bratsk and to portray its builders. Roger Somville left Brussels for the industrial region of Borinage (where he produced portraits of Belgian, but also Algerian and Polish workers, which were exhibited in Moscow in 1958). Encounters between artists and workers were certainly under surveillance and some workers would have had no interest in such meetings. But they brought art out of legitimate artistic places, while defining workers as art patrons and encouraging them to become amateurs and thus producers of art in turn. Formal meetings did create (sometimes unexpected) connections between art and workplaces. Because it was not based and centered on art worlds, socialist realism can therefore be described as *decentered art*.

Even if it did not represent the actual life of the workers and even if it did not have to satisfy them, socialist realism had to be embedded in the life of the working classes. The *embeddedness* of socialist realism in each local context is still a broad field of study for scholars. Socialist realism varied when it was addressed to Sicilian peasants, to Czech workers who belonged to a red bastion on the outskirts of Prague with a long industrial history, or to Bulgarian former peasants, who had just migrated to an industrial city. The complexity of socialist realism related to the complexity of the working classes in Europe as well as to the various economic and industrial phases through which the different European areas passed.

Despite this variety of contexts, a communist iconography was progressively constructed. What emerged were images of demonstrations, of agita-

tors who excite the crowd, homage to the dead worker[33] and the celebration of communist leaders (one of the most tricky topics, since many people and many artists were reluctant to participate in the idolization of politicians), etc. The study of these iconographic variations with a precise contextualization would certainly contribute to the understanding of socialist realism. Moreover, people involved in the creation of socialist realism from different countries shared similar issues, and they were gathered around the common problems and paradoxes of socialist realism. For instance, the paradox that socialist realism had the mission of indoctrinating working people, but also giving them a feeling of dignity. Another paradox was that socialist realism was to promote the lower classes, but also to offer a cross-class alliance (in this sense, it had to be a "national" art). Because it was an imperative and a doctrine, but at the same time a vague notion, socialist realism led to many discussions and exchanges.

The question of modernism and/or avant-garde (actually neo-avant-garde, to be historically accurate) is even more complicated than socialist realism. Broadly characterized, socialist realism was a concept to homogenize "socialist culture," especially in Eastern Europe, and an instrument to colonize this part of the continent by the USSR; it was the Soviet origin doctrine of Stalinist cultural politics. Modernism and avant-garde art was something different, actually opposing the Stalinization of Eastern Europe, referring both to the international sources, as well the local ones. The first problem, however, is that in contrast to the Western studies, Anglo-American in particular, neo-avant-garde (happening, object and body art, installations and especially conceptual art, etc.) was not so much differentiated from the modernist tradition. In the US, both artists and art critics insisted on a critical approach of the neo-avant-garde toward modernism, both on an aesthetic and a political level; in Eastern Europe they were aware of the aesthetic contradictions, but not necessarily of the political ones. The reason is quite obvious: since socialist realism was seen as the politiciza-

33 Georges Duby, "L'ouvrier mort," in *L'Art et la société* (Paris: Broché, 2002), 1265–71. The French communist painter Edouard Pignon provides an interesting key to understanding the motive of the dead worker: "The dead worker in the painting is not seen as a dead man. He is the starting point of something, the pretext to this solidarity which was, for me, the union of workers." Edouard Pignon, *La quête de la réalité* (Paris: Gonthier, 1966), 50.

tion of art (actually Communist Party propaganda), the artists rejecting the Stalinization of culture were seeking to oppose it in what was known as autonomous art. Modernism was a very good tool with which to conduct such a strategy. Since, however, the trauma of socialist realism did not disappear in the course of the post-Stalinist decades (that is what historians call the Stalinist de-Stalinization[34]), the aesthetic critique of modernism exercised by the neo-avant-garde artists was not followed by a critique of the ideology of the autonomy of art and thus did not result in political critique. On the one hand, because of historical contexts and specific circumstances (different in each country), the autonomy of art was perceived in Eastern Europe as the political attitude against socialist realism, while on the other hand, direct political involvement in art in some countries (such as Poland) was understood to belong to the same realm as socialist realism. Finally, the neo-avant-garde artists rejected modernist aesthetics, but not the modernist ideology of the autonomy of art understood to be the opposition to Stalinism, and post-Stalinism. Of course, "autonomy" did not mean the same thing in every country, and especially not the same in Eastern Europe as in the West. Generally speaking, everywhere it meant that art should not be directly involved in politics. But in contrast to the West, autonomous art in Eastern Europe was not perceived as a means to support the power system. It was seen as an attitude with the intent of subverting the socialist regime, which promoted "political" (read: propaganda) art. However, in the course of years, particularly in Yugoslavia and Poland, such a position became ambiguous, since the cultural agenda adopted a modernist value system and did not insist on supporting socialist realism. Moreover, it seemed that some communist regimes felt more comfortable with "autonomous" art, modernist in particular, than any other. Art historians used to call this "socialist modernism."

The other problem with modernism is that in the West, especially seen from the US perspective, it was perceived as the global cultural strategy of Western—actually American—political hegemony.[35] Seen from the Eastern

34 Martin Damus, *Malerei der DDR, Funktionen der bildenden Kunst im Realen Sozialismus* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rewohlt Taschenbuch Verlag, 1991), 123–82.

35 Serge Guilbaut, *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art: Abstract Expressionism, Freedom and the Cold War* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1993).

European perspective, however, it was not understood as such; instead, it was seen as a window on an unfamiliar world. Although most of the artists interested in abstract painting saw Paris as the cultural capital of that time—which also was a target of the US policy of cultural domination—they still recognized all Western influences as a sort of liberation from socialist realism, i.e., Stalinist cultural policy. This trend went together with the mythologization of the West as the utopia of freedom. This explains why, when the neo-avant-garde appeared, both in the US and Western Europe, the artists in the East did not buy into its critique of Western, bourgeois culture, since for most of them that culture was more a symbol of freedom than of oppression. Finally, this is the second reason why they rejected the neo-avant-garde political critique and its political involvement (with some exceptions, especially in Hungary), accepting at the same time its aesthetic critique of modernism, mostly abstract painting. At this stage, it should be acknowledged that the way the various art traditions were politically instrumentalized does not only rely on the macro context but mainly on micro situations in which the actors may (or may not) make specific moves.

In brief, socialist realism and avant-garde present two very different kinds of complexity. But both are intimately related to the social history of the societies in which they were born and to the history of the social stratification of socialist societies, from the bottom (the working classes, which were at the same time honored and still marginalized) to the top (the bourgeoisies, which perceived themselves as threatened).

Jeu d'échelles

Scale analysis is a major issue for art geography.[36] Between different scales (local, regional, national, supranational and international), the national one is certainly the most mobilized by scholars, at the time of socialism and today. Socialist countries inherited national frames that were shaped by numerous conflicts in the nineteenth century and in the first half of the twentieth century. They inherited the tension between a glorious idealized past and an allegedly troubled present that invokes nationalism. Competitiveness and wars

36 Jacques Revel, ed., *Jeux d'échelles. La micro analyse à l'expérience* (Paris: Editions de l'EHESS, 1996).

caused nations to define themselves against each other, each one developing the idea of national superiority.[37] The interwar period was "characterized by the hopeless efforts of the nation-states (better characterized as nationalizing states) to create the national societies."[38] The existence of "nation" after 1945 was an obvious fact for the huge majority of the population; the transnational construction of national particularities that began in the eighteenth century was then completed. The end of the Second World War brought about new territorial modifications in Europe (for instance, the territory to the east of the Oder-Neisse line or Bessarabia). But the military domination of the USSR over Eastern Europe and the existence of the Warsaw Pact avoided national tensions; territorial controversies concerned only the border regions of the Soviet Bloc—for instance, the Macedonia that Bulgaria, supported by the USSR, reclaimed for Yugoslavia.

We know that the communist parties did not call national references into question. Since Marx's writings, the construction of nations was seen as a step toward the modernization of society that went with urbanization and industrialization. Furthermore, the planned economy was organized on a national level. Socialist regimes had consequently no reason to break with national narratives. On the contrary, they used them to increase their own legitimacy. The importance of the nation was visible in the erection of various national monuments that mixed socialism and nationalism.

In the form of monuments or other forms, art continued to play an active role in the definition of national identities, as it had done since early modern times.[39] Socialist realism had to be "national in its form, socialist in its content," which validated the idea that each country possesses a "national form." In the second half of the twentieth century, rare were they who questioned the idea that a work of art expresses or somehow reveals national particularities; "great art" was seen as the sign of a "great nation." Art critics and art

37 Miroslav Hroch, *Das Europa der Nationen, die moderne Nationsbildung im europäischen Vergleich* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005); Pavel Kolar and Milos Reznik, eds., *Historische Nationsforschung im geteilten Europa 1945–1989* (Cologne: SH Verlag, 2012). Marius Turda, *The Idea of National Superiority in Central Europe, 1880–1918* (London: Edwin Mellen Press, 2005).

38 Pieter Judson, "Introduction," in *Constructing Nationalities in East-Central Europe*, ed. Pieter Judson and Marsha L. Rozenblit (Oxford, New York: Bergahn Books, 2004), 13.

39 Anthony D. Smith, *The Nation Made Real: Art and National Identity in Western Europe 1600–1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

historians were active protagonists in the nationalization of art, since one of their missions was to explain the national dimension of a work of art.[40]

This present volume is about questioning national "traditions" and "heritages" (in official and unofficial artistic expression): the surrealist tradition in Czechoslovakia, the heritage of abstract geometry in Poland, and that of proletarian realism in the GDR. How were heritages built up? How were some artistic creations selected as "tradition" among all existing ones? Local modern art was especially important, as was the national tradition of realism and architectural historical details. These were the sources (actually "national") of "new" culture. In terms of modernism and avant-garde (actually, it depended on the country) local tradition was sometimes juxtaposed not only with socialist realism, but also with imported modern art from the West. In Poland, this was constructivist or neoconstructivist art, recognized as the "genuine" Polish avant-garde tradition, juxtaposed with "French" Informel, while in Czechoslovakia it was mostly Czech surrealism.

One vivid topic that historiography has overlooked so far is the issue of folklore at the time of socialism. During the entire socialist period, a substantial and stable part of cultural relations between countries concerned exhibitions of folk art: alleged artisanal objects, costumes and headdresses, etc. The socialist period thus revealed a perfect continuity with the nineteenth century and its "invention of traditions." Folk tradition was regarded as the expression of the nation. We still have to understand how and to what extent these exhibitions constructed national images and contributed to the integration of the bloc. Moreover, a better comprehension of socialist folklore could shed new light on "high art" (that is, the art produced within the context of academies and professional societies), on realist production, and also on the avant-garde. Indeed, all of them had a link to peoples' arts and handicrafts whether they rejected this tradition or incorporated and redesigned it.

National scale is not the only scale to be taken into account. Lower down, at a regional level, we observe original configurations, complicating the national frame. It is more interesting to study practices of control, censorship

40 Robert Born, Alena Janatkova, and Adam S. Labuda, eds., *Die Kunsthistoriographien in Ostmitteleuropa und der nationale Diskurs* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 2004). Michela Passini, *La fabrique de l'art national. Le nationalisme et les origines de l'histoire de l'art en France et en Allemagne 1870–1933* (Paris: Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 2012).

and repression at this level, due to the fact that these measures were the result of continuous negotiations between artists and regional administrations or party sections. Besides, some cities (Timişoara, Leipzig and Tallinn, for instance) asserted themselves and became artistic capital cities. After 1989, we know the process of the "regionalization of art" or even its topography[41]—but we know very little about the situation before 1989 or the root causes of this phenomenon. We have to go lower to observe very local facts, at the level of the neighborhoods, the streets, the apartment buildings, in other words at the level of everyday life.[42] In the case of socialist realism, as we said, this art had to be embedded in everyday life and interact with it (whereas it did not necessarily have to represent it). "Local" and "everyday" were two of the key words and myths of the socialist societies. Communist ideology pretended to operate at this level, to change daily and material life. Socialism risked its legitimacy, in order to provide the whole population with a decent standard of living. Here again, the problem arose for the avant-garde artists too, whose artistic research could take on meaning when rooted in everyday life. In this respect, we are thinking, for example, of the formal research linked to the production of design or in situ performances.

But we also have to go higher, to a supranational level. We find first the recreation of ancient territorial constructions, such as the Baltic Sea (the festival of the Baltic Sea in Rostock in 1965 crossed the Iron Curtain and even included Iceland), or the Balkans (an entity that Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and also Greece contested). Was "Eastern Europe" a relevant supranational category at this time? Did actors use this entity? From the beginning, socialist realism was conceived as an international (and not an Eastern European) artistic project. As for the avant-garde, artists yearned to be part of what was happening abroad. In both cases, the idea of Eastern Europe was a limiting one. All artists desired their range in a broader perspective. The reception of the West German book by Klaus Groh, *Aktuelle Kunst in Osteuropa* (1972),[43] of-

41 Piotr Piotrowski, "Art Criticism in Defence of Regionalisation in Post-1989 Eastern Europe," in *The Regionalisation of Art Criticism: Its Possibility and Interventions in Space* (Taiwan: AICA, 2005), 13–21. Piotr Piotrowski, *Art and Democracy in Post-Communist Europe* (London: Reaktion Books, 2012), 55–79.

42 David Crowley and Susan E. Reid, eds., *Socialist Spaces: Sites of Everyday Life in the Eastern Bloc* (Oxford: Bloomsbury Academic, 2002). The special question related to the issue is that of fashion. See Djurdja Barlett, *Fashion East: The Spectre That Haunted Socialism* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2010).

43 Klaus Groh, *Aktuelle Kunst in Osteuropa: CSSR, Jugoslawien, Polen, Rumänien, UdSSR, Ungarn* (Cologne: Dumont, 1972).

fers a good example. On the one hand, the quoted artists from Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Poland, Romania, the USSR and Hungary were satisfied that their art was presented and commented on, but on the other hand, many of them felt uncomfortable with this presentation, which placed very different artists side by side and created an artificial Eastern Europe. The space "Eastern Europe" is mainly a creation of Western actors, before 1989 and most importantly after 1989. This geographic category is still problematic today—it has been rejected in recent scholarship, but remains implicitly present. This refusal was the motto of the exhibition *Les promesses du passé* held in Paris in 2010 that exclusively presented artists originating from the area formerly called "Eastern Europe." How far then did this category disappear? "Eastern Europe" is no longer presented as a conglomerate of socialist countries (whether they belonged to the Warsaw Pact or were nonaligned countries or in direct relation to China). The exhibition in Paris was thematic and monographic, underlining the personalities rather than the collective expression, of which the notion of the nation is just one form. Negation of the historiographical notion of "Eastern Europe" can therefore lead to a refutation of national and specific political contextualization. On the contrary, with this volume, we would like to stay away from the category of Eastern Europe without decontextualizing the artistic creations.

Internationalism

Finally, we reach the international scale. The prevailing national vision should not prevent us from looking for signals of international dialogue. International circulation proceeded despite (or more precisely through) national definitions. In this volume, we will investigate how far the exchanges that proceeded *above nations* resulted in considerations that went *beyond nations*.

The notion of internationalism does not refer only to exchanges at the international level; it also has a political content and is inseparable from the communist world, all the more so during the period 1945–89, when the socialist camp was clearly identifiable and in competition with the capitalist camp. The Cold War can be described as the opposition between two universalities. Each side claimed to have universal ambitions, but what was uni-

versalized differed in each case. At the opposite end of democratic and bourgeois universalism, communist internationalism invoked the universality of class struggle. Communist ideology linked local struggles and brought them together in the name of the communist battle against the class enemy: a strike in Italy, the mobilization of workers in a Hungarian factory to exceed the norms of the plan, and the military battles of the Vietnamese were all linked in a global battle. We should not underestimate the role of communist ideology that gave a common basis to actors despite all their differences. Socialist realism, which provided the same visual language for various battles, was able to contribute to this globalization.

The concrete processes of *fabrique de l'universel*[44] were based on several universalizing strategies. The three different strategies of internationalism that appeared after 1917 (the engagement in the world revolution, the defense of the USSR as the homeland of socialism and the humanitarian causes)[45] had different evolutions after 1945.

The first one, the engagement in the world revolution, did not fare well. The figure of the internationalist militant in the postwar period was rarer than it was in the interwar period, during the several revolutions of the 1920s or during the Spanish Civil War. As Europe after 1945 did not experience revolutions, this strategy rarely caused a stir. But it survived in others parts of the world, notably in Latin America. Nevertheless, works of art and monuments could maintain the memory of this kind of involvement.

The second one, the defense of the USSR, was an obvious geopolitical and diplomatic fact: the countries of the Warsaw Pact were protecting the USSR. The fear of a war between the West and the USSR was constantly present, as numerous works of art suggesting a nuclear war are evidence of this. But the involvement of the populations and of the artists in the defense of the USSR was certainly not as great as the socialist regimes expected—the same populations experienced the Soviet occupation after 1945 and faced military interventions, such as in Budapest in 1956 and Prague in 1968. The works of art

44 Pascale Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007); Pierre-Yves Saunier and Akira Iriye, eds., *Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

45 Serge Wolikow, "Internationalistes et internationalismes communistes," in *Le siècle des communismes* (Paris: Edition de l'Atelier, 2000), 511–37.

calling for the defense of the USSR were few in number and appear to have been one-offs. It may be that among Western communists the idea of the protection of the USSR remained the strongest.

The third strategy (the humanitarian causes) was the most popular one. Around official causes (Korea, Vietnam, Algeria), which were of course orchestrated, meetings and collections were organized in the socialist countries, in schools, factories and districts. Numerous works of art came with these mobilizations and contributed to the practical construction of internationalism. They also led to artistic identifications; when the Russian artist Sergej Bugaev chose the pseudonym of Afrika in 1986, it was not a mere exoticism.

One possible structure for the book could have been to tackle the problem of centers and peripheries. It would have had the advantage of highlighting inequalities between spaces. There are places that are marked by meeting points and cultural events, and places that are marked by isolation and remoteness. Proximity and distance, even if they are relative concepts—especially where no face-to-face exchanges were involved—did have a specific effect on the creation, diffusion and reception of art.

This method of presentation would have lead to a separation of countries and cities into two rigid categories, recreating and imposing a hierarchy that was surely not as obvious as historians would claim today. What should be made of the places where important events took place, while not representing centers? What should be made of the order expressed by the communist powers to move into territories that lacked cultural facilities—an order that placed the peripheries in the center, so to speak? Such a binary division would have overlooked the dynamic possibilities of marginality and would have reproduced the auto-legitimizing effect of centrality. That is why we preferred to organize the book in four parts.

The first part ("Moving people") investigates displacements of different actors. How did they cross frontiers? What did they expect to find, what did they actually find and what did they retain? What did they bring back? Indeed, this part investigates two very different kinds of moving. On the one hand, temporary displacement: for instance, John Berger's travels to Moscow, Willy Wolf's travels to London or the journeys of artists from the Byelorussian Soviet Republic to Tallinn, St. Petersburg and Krakow. On the other

hand, the emigrations, which were definitive or at least permanent moves: for instance, the migrations of Josep Renau, who was born in Spain, first to Mexico in 1939 and then to the GDR in 1958; or unofficial Hungarian artists who fled to the West. Between the two poles, we find intermediary situations, as that of Gabriele Mucchi from Milan, who for several years taught in the GDR and very often traveled to Czechoslovakia, presenting an original case of an artistic career on each side of the Iron Curtain.

With the second part ("Moving objects"), we want to draw attention to the circulation of works of art. Works of art, and not only people, moved. The contributions give many examples of observations of Soviet realism, Picasso's and Guttuso's paintings or geometrical abstractions. We also want to mention the case of artistic creations without objects, such as performances (like Western Fluxus artists' performances in Prague in 1966). We believe it is crucial to stress this point (the conditions in which art was experienced) in order to understand the specific phenomena hidden behind the sometimes much too evasive word "transfer." Artistic imitations and appropriations are based on the observed images, of the original, a copy or a reproduction.

The third part ("Gathering people") refers to the particular situations in which people (and sometimes works of art, too) were gathered: multinational exhibitions, festivals, biennials, conferences, from the very official exhibitions in Moscow to the informal meeting between Czechoslovakian and Hungarian artists at the Balatonboglár Chapel in 1972. Where and why were these events organized? Did they aim to smooth out diplomatic rivalry on the consensual field of art? And more importantly, what can be considered as an international meeting? The many institutionalized and informal conventions may be seen as a confirmation of national feeling and a validation of the single national narratives. Indeed, some of these meetings used to classify works of art in national sections and some of them were intended to envision alleged national particularities. Internationalization and nationalization could go hand in hand. At the same time, these events offered opportunities for a large variety of persons to meet and get acquainted with a great diversity of objects. They offered occasions to share views about the common concerns we have mentioned. These meetings often shifted the boundaries marked out in each country between what was official and what was unofficial: it was not rare for official meetings to give rise to unofficial contacts, and it was not

rare for art that had been censored within a socialist country to be shown as official art during these meetings. International events were thus complex events in which national definitions of art mixed with the conventional view of friendship between peoples and chance encounters—the outcomes, often unexpected, are worth examining.

The last part ("Defining Europe") broadens our outlook and asks how communist movements in Europe regarded spaces outside Europe. As we have said, in order to understand European circulation, we have to place them inside global networks. This part investigates the relationships with other socialist powers (China, Mexico or Cuba) and the anticolonialist discourse. Communist artists frequently traveled throughout the rest of the world, bringing back images and creating images based on what they had seen. These images fueled a certain orientalism—an orientalism with a socialist veneer, which could be called "a socialist orientalism"—the "Orient" being part of the Soviet world (notably Central Asia) or outside the Soviet World. The anticolonialist views held by the communist authorities could go hand in hand with a form of paternalism, expecting of the rest of the world to follow the path marked out by the socialist countries, even if the various parts of the world were not virgin territory where the two camps, capitalist and communist, were able to confront each other as they pleased. They were all embedded in a history: some, in Africa and Asia, were engaged in the process of decolonization; others were international powers, such as China, or socialist countries that already had a long experience of revolution, such as Mexico. Moreover, some parts of the world could not recognize themselves as belonging to either the capitalist or the communist universalism and contested their universalizing strategies. Finally, these countries did not necessarily occupy a peripheral position. Mexico, for example, was seen by many European artists as one of the key centers of socialist art, a place where the most interesting proposals were developed in terms of public art, popular art and revolutionary art.

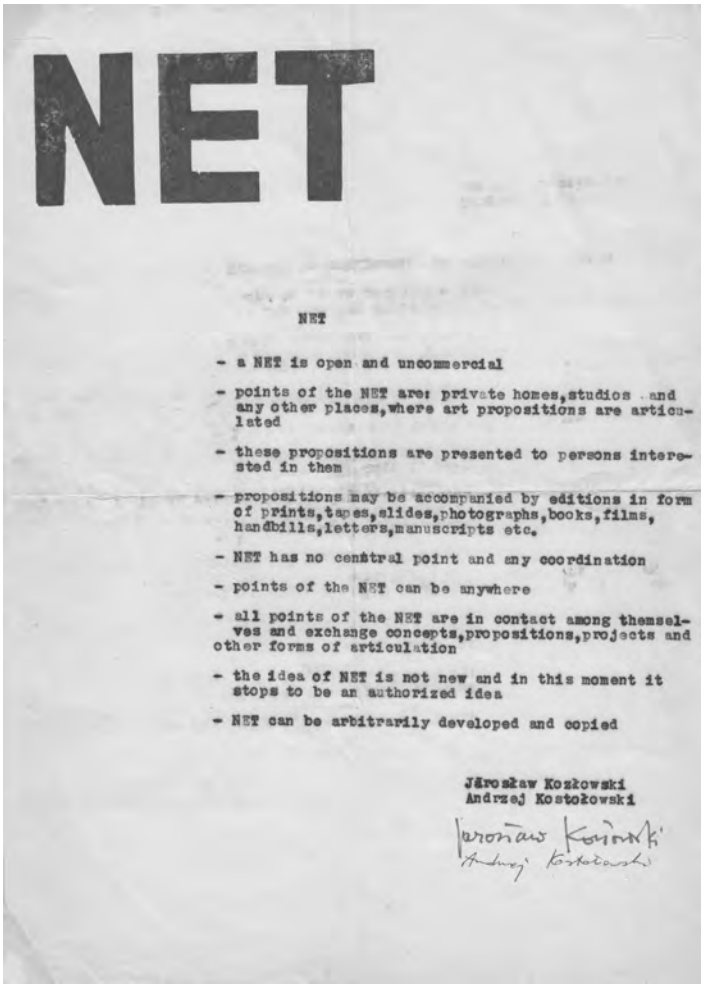
With thirty-five contributions, the present volume gathers an unusually high number of texts. Most of them are case studies on a single artist, image, exhibition, meeting, etc. From the outset, the project was conceived as a kaleidoscopic research work, bringing together advanced scholars and PhD

students exploring mostly unknown fields of studies and giving original insights into archives, images and interpretations. A discrepancy of style, backgrounds and sensibility to the current trends of human sciences cannot be avoided—we did not try to mask it, on the contrary we consider it to be a strength. It reflects the diversity of the academic community writing on art history across present-day Europe. And it gives a better picture of the diversity of exchanges, thanks to substantial and contextualized analysis. We must reiterate that this volume is a long way from being comprehensive and cannot provide a complete atlas of exchanges. For example, we only hint at one of the most important initiatives concerning the internationalization of art in the socialist countries—the NET in Poland. In 1971, Jarosław Kozłowski, an artist, and Andrzej Kostołowski, an art critic (who withdrew within a couple of years), invented a global network of artists (and some art critics) who wanted to exchange works of art, letters, articles, books, catalogs, postcards, journals and pictures (i.e., photographs and photocopies, etc).[46] Ultimately, over the course of more than a dozen years, a few hundred people from both Eastern and Western Europe, the US and Canada, Latin America and Asia (mostly Japan), and a few from Israel, Australia and New Zealand, participated in this initiative. Based on these contacts, Jarosław Kozłowski founded the Gallery Akumulatory 2 in Poznań a year later, showing many artists from the NET list—the most international, even global gallery in Eastern Europe. Of course, another important gallery in Poland, the Foksal Gallery in Warsaw, was also international; however, the curators were almost exclusively interested in Western art. They held only one exhibition from Eastern Europe, of Hungarian art (April/May 1971), while Akumulatory 2 exhibited Czech, Hungarian and GDR artists a couple of times. One could also find some artists from other "peripheries," such as South America.[47]

Although the panorama is incomplete, we hope nonetheless that the perspectives highlighted contribute to a better understanding of the importance of communist Europe in the political economy of art during the second half

46 Bożena Czubak and Jarosław Kozłowski, *NET—Art of Dialogue/Sieć—Sztuka Dialogu* (Warsaw: Profile Foundation, 2012).

47 We could only find comparable geographical orientation in Yugoslavia, but curators did work under different circumstances there. On the Akumulatory 2 gallery, see Bożena Czubak and Jarosław Kozłowski, eds., *Beyond Corrupted Eye: Akumulatory 2 Gallery, 1972–1990* (Warsaw: Zacheta National Gallery, 2012).


NET

NET

- a NET is open and uncommercial
- points of the NET are: private homes, studios and any other places, where art propositions are articulated
- these propositions are presented to persons interested in them
- propositions may be accompanied by editions in form of prints, tapes, slides, photographs, books, films, handbills, letters, manuscripts etc.
- NET has no central point and any coordination
- points of the NET can be anywhere
- all points of the NET are in contact among themselves and exchange concepts, propositions, projects and other forms of articulation
- the idea of NET is not new and in this moment it stops to be an authorized idea
- NET can be arbitrarily developed and copied

Jarosław Kozłowski
Andrzej Kostołowski

Jarosław Kozłowski
Andrzej Kostołowski

Figure 1.4.
Andrzej Kostołowski and Jarosław Kozłowski, *NET*, 1972.
Courtesy of Jarosław Kozłowski.

of the twentieth century. And we hope to continue reflecting on the links between ideology and art. Academic works on the capitalist side have shown the relevance of a precise analysis of universalizing ideology.[48] To insist on the influence of ideology and to understand its declinations does not impoverish

48 Guilbaut, *How New York*; Nancy Jachec, *The Philosophy and Politics of Abstract Expressionism, 1940–1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

the analysis of works of art; on the contrary, it enriches such an analysis. The issue for us is neither to rehabilitate nor to define an artistic quality since that would lead to search beyond ideology; on the contrary, we hope to offer a better understanding of ideologies, taking into consideration their ambitions, their contradictions and their concrete applications.

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