

Freedom in Sight 1989 and Europe's New Start

<i>Editorial</i>	1989 and the spirit of time	5
<i>Adam Michnik</i>	Defence of Freedom Reflections on 1989	9
<i>György Konrád</i>	Without Beatings and Gunfire Notes from the Turning Point: Dec. '88 – Jan. '89	19
<i>Petr Pithart</i>	Birth Mark How the “Velvet Revolution” Degenerated into a “Regime Change”	27
<i>Tomas Venclova</i>	Those Who Lived in the Cold The Lithuanian Dissidence 1953–1980	41
History		
<i>Karl Schlögel</i>	The “Merchant Ants” of Zoo Station On History on the Sidelines and Forgotten Europeans	53
<i>Wolfgang Eichwede</i>	Don Quixote's Victory The Civil Rights Activists and the Revolutions of 1989	61
<i>Oldřich Tůma</i>	The Shadow That Disappeared The Collapse of the Czechoslovak Regime in Comparison	85
<i>Andrzej Paczkowski</i>	Polish Civil War The Unrelenting Decline of Communism	97

<i>Gerhard Simon</i>	History's Cunning Perestroika, the Fall of the Berlin Wall, and the end of the Soviet Union	119
<i>Fedor Luk'ianov</i>	Looking Back to the Future Russia between History and Globalisation	133
<i>Jerzy Holzer</i>	Taking Leave of Illusion Solidarność and the Idea of a Society Free of Conflict	151
<i>Jiřina Šiklová</i>	Freedom Is Not Masculine The Czech Women's Movement before and after 1989	167
<i>Edmund Wnuk-Lipiński</i>	The Great Transformation Poland on the Road to the "Round Table"	173
<i>Stefan Samerski</i>	The Devil and Holy Water John Paul II and the Erosion of Communism	183

Spirit

<i>Jáchym Topol</i>	From the Asylum to Europe On the Obsession of History and the Irresistible Desire to Provoke the Controllers	195
<i>Katharina Raabe</i>	A Reading Room Literature in East Central Europe since 1989	205
<i>Aleš Šteger</i>	Mercy! Mercy! Professor, Do You Understand the World?	229
<i>Gemma Pörzgen</i>	Dynamism and Persistence A European Public and Its Borders	237
<i>Christina Links Katharina Raabe</i>	"The Literature of Which We Dreamed" The Book and Ambivalent Outcomes of 1989	251
<i>Tomas Venclova</i>	Berlin Three Poems	264

<i>Doris Liebermann</i>	“I Understand Only the Man Who Falls” East European Influences in the Work of H.-H. Grimmling	271
<i>Dobrochna Dabert</i>	The Turning Point 1989 in Polish Film	283
<i>Ivaylo Ditchchev</i>	Borderline Cases Instructions for Use	291
Time		
<i>Stefan Auer</i>	Who is afraid of the ‘New Europe’ Nationalism and European Integration since 1989	311
<i>Kai-Olaf Lang</i>	Rebellion of the Impatient Populism in East Central Europe	333
<i>Dorothee Bohle Béla Greskovits</i>	Economic Miracle and National Debt On the Political Economy of East Central Europe	349
<i>Vladimír Handl</i>	From Soviet Satellite to Integration with the West 20 Years of Czech Europe Policy: A Balance	357
<i>Aleksander Smolar</i>	The Walls in People’s Heads Memory Culture Divides Europe	369
<i>Robert Brier</i>	Sweeping Lines On the Historicisation of the Transition around 1989	381
Abstracts		392

A b s t r a c t s**Freedom in Sight
1989 and Europe's New Start**

Adam Michnik

In Defence of Freedom

Reflections on 1989

The year 1989 brought a revolution without revolution. The struggle against Communism revealed a belief in the importance of human freedom. But this freedom brought with it paradoxes. The workers who went on strike to win their freedom were the first victims of the transformation. Solidarność strongholds went bankrupt. But throughout this great expanse, save for the Balkans and Russia, there have never been a better 20 years than the past two decades. Today, Europe is being put to the test. Cynicism, which undermines every value system, and authoritarian temptations are threatening freedom. The defence of the republic is at stake.

György Konrád

Without Beatings and Gunfire

Notes from the Turning Point: December '88–January '89

What is left of Socialism? Us. The lessons and traces, the style, the moral, and logic of these 40 years cannot simply be tossed in the rubbish bin. An experiment is being carried out here. How can one prepare the way for democracy by intellectual means? How can we develop our human dignity? How can we learn the courage and calm of freedom? Time of acceleration, almost revolution. A revolution of normality. Instead of Moscow's road to integration, we have chosen Brussels's concept. Not a single Belgian tank was needed.

Petr Pithart

Birth Mark

How the “Velvet Revolution” Degenerated into a “Regime Change”

The Prague Spring did not come to an end in August 1968. Only the internal occupation by the armed Czechoslovak state power a year later broke the resistance. What followed was the demise of society, the retreat of people to the private sphere. The destruction of trust between people in the 20 long years of “normalisation” had consequences that went far beyond the year 1989. Predatory capitalism has turned the disorder of the shadow economy into law. What remains is “the solidarity of the shaken”, which is what Charta 77 held together as a pluralistic community without ideology.

Tomas Venclova

Those Who Lived in the Cold

The Lithuanian Dissidence 1953–1980

Lithuania is not Hungary. What sounds banal was cruel reality. The Soviet Union repressed the will to freedom in the Baltic republics even more so than in the East Central European satellite states. Therefore, after the defeat of the partisan struggle against Soviet occupation, many nationally minded Lithuanians considered open resistance pointless. They behaved as if they had conformed to the system, in order to expand the limits of what was allowed. Only in the 1960s did noteworthy underground groups again come into existence. A year after the 1975 CSCE Final Act, several dissidents, together with the Lithuanian Helsinki Group, dared to found the first non-conspiratorial association of non-conformists. Unlike most Lithuanian dissident groups, they struggled not only for national independence but for the freedom of the individual as well. With that, they laid the cornerstone for modern Lithuania.

Karl Schlögel

The “Merchant Ants” of Zoo Station

On History on the Sidelines and Forgotten Europeans

There is no historical zero second. All of that talk about the break with Communism in 1989 coming “out of the clear blue sky” only says something about the limited horizons of contemporaries. The year 1989 was not made by “great men” either. The fall of the Berlin Wall was preceded by a long phase of attrition. It is connected with the movement of the East-West Express and the “merchant ants” from Europe’s east, for whom Berlin became their point of transfer. These people are the heroes of this break with Communism. Together with the bridge engineers, budget airlines, and bus companies, they created the new Europe. Give Eurolines the Charlemagne Prize!

Wolfgang Eichwede

Don Quixote's Victory

The Civil Rights Activists and the Revolutions of 1989

The civil rights activists did not make the revolutions of 1989. But with their key concepts and definitions of law, non-violence, and dialogue as well as the institutionalisation of the latter at the Round Table, they gave the events of 1989 a certain profile. The birth of the human rights movement was 5 December 1965. From that point on, civil rights activists in the Soviet Union, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and the German Democratic Republic tried to exert influence on society and those in power. The power of the powerless proved stronger than the coercive force of the repressive regimes.

Oldřich Tůma

When the Shadow Disappeared

The Collapse of the Czechoslovak Regime in Comparison

The collapse of the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia came late, but was swift. When the shadow of 1968 disappeared and fear was banished, society reacted spontaneously and the fall of Communist rule accelerated sharply. Although the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia stayed put longer than the Polish or Hungarian regime, there were many similarities between them. The collapsing regimes had relied on the same ideology and the same methods. Thus the same forces confronted the Communist regimes with the same tactics. Above all, developments reinforced one another. The interaction between events in German Democratic Republic and Czechoslovakia was especially intensive. The fact that the Soviet Union had withdrawn all manner of support for these regimes was decisive in their unconditional surrender without putting up resistance.

Andrzej Paczkowski

The Polish Civil War

The Unrelenting Decline of Communism

The process of overcoming Communism in Poland began at the end of the 1970s. The unstable economic situation led to strikes. Workers closed ranks to form *Solidarność*. Together with the Catholic Church, the labour union campaigned for non-violence and reforms. The regime reacted with repression and introduced martial law. With that began a decade of civil war by other means. At home, the regime lost all of its legitimacy. Abroad, Gorbachev's perestroika led to the loss of reinsurance in alliance policy. Poland's regime saw itself forced to integrate the opposition in order to find a way out of the crisis. The Round Table became the forum of dialogue, the partially democratic elections a plebiscite against Communist rule.

Gerhard Simon

History's Cunning

Perestroika, the Fall of the Berlin Wall, and the end of the Soviet Union

In Germany, Mikhail Gorbachev is considered the architect of unification, in Russia, the destroyer of the Soviet Union. Both processes form a continuous chain of events. The Communist parties' loss of power in East Central Europe and the end of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union were the result of perestroika in the Soviet Union. Without the CPSU, however, there was no cement to hold the Soviet Union together. The mobilisation of anti-Soviet forces there profited from East Central Europe's new start. In 1991, it had progressed so far that a majority of the people, including the Communist functionaries, considered the dissolution of the Soviet Union unavoidable.

Fedor Luk'ianov

Looking Back to the Future

Russia between History and Globalisation

Without Perestroika and New Thinking in the Soviet Union, the East-West conflict would not have been ended, nor would East Central Europeans have achieved their freedom. Twenty years after 1989, Russia is still searching for its political identity and its place in the world. Russia's political elites have not gotten over the collapse of the Soviet Union. The longing for empire and a new great power consciousness stand in contradiction to the economic and demographic possibilities. In domestic politics, Russia's path remains different from the one taken by the post-Communist states of East Central Europe. In foreign policy, a readjustment of relations with the European Union is on the agenda.

Jerzy Holzer

Taking Leave of Illusion

Solidarność and the Idea of a Society Free of Conflict

Solidarność and its Communist opponent had one thing in common: the dream of a society free of conflict. But Solidarność was no more successful than the Communists in convincing Poland's citizens of their model of society. In the 1980s, Solidarność was weakened by martial law and internal conflict. Most of the population turned its back on it and withdrew into the private sphere. After 1989, the struggle between the wings of the post-Solidarność camp continued. The dispute over the proper treatment of the past and the speed of transformation has split Polish society. To this day, the political trenches run through the camp of the former Solidarność movement.

Jiřina Šiklová

Freedom Is Not Masculine

The Czech Women's Movement before and after 1989

Socialism maintained that it had resolved the issue of the sexes. But for women decreed equality meant above all a double burden on the job and in the family. They did not have access to decision-making positions of power as it was anyway. Even worse, however, was the violation of elementary civil and human rights. While the Czech women's movement was nationalised, strong-willed Czech women fought for the freedom of all members of society. It may still not be clear to many western feminists, but the preconditions for addressing women's issues were something the women of East Central Europe won only in 1989. Since then, a lively civil society and gender studies have developed.

Edmund Wnuk-Lipiński

The Great Transformation

Poland on the Road to the "Round Table"

The break with Communism in 1989 began in Poland at least ten years earlier. The peaceful dismantling of Communism was the result of a transition that took place within society. The visit of the Pope in 1979 overcame the atomisation of society. The economic crisis advanced the establishment of a mass movement around *Solidarność*. With martial law, the regime lost the rest of its legitimacy, but the opposition was not in a position to take power. The Round Table broke the stalemate in favour of the opposition and set in motion the political about-face within the Socialist camp.

Stefan Samerski

The Devil and Holy Water

John Paul II and the Erosion of Communism

John Paul II contributed to the erosion of Communist rule in Eastern Europe. Already as the Archbishop of Cracow, he had championed freedom of religion and human rights. After his election to the Papacy in 1978, he continued this strategy. Through his travels and addresses, he called for dialogue with the regime, defended the independence of *Solidarność*, and so advanced the break with Communism. He avoided being instrumentalised for political ends. From the Christian message he derived an equidistance vis-à-vis all political and economic systems the moment he saw the dignity of man violated.

Jáchym Topol

From the Asylum to Europe

On the Obsession of History and the Irresistible Desire to Provoke the Controllers

Czech writer Jáchym Topol thinks little about heroising dissidents – of whose ranks he was once one of the youngest. However, he vehemently struggles against disparagement of freedom. In order to understand what East Central Europe has achieved in the past 20 years, one needs only to travel to Belarus.

Katharina Raabe

A Reading Room

Literature in East Central Europe since 1989

Eduard Goldstücker's prediction that the historically significant novel of the present would come from East Central Europe was promptly fulfilled in Péter Nádas's *A Book of Memories*. The works of Aleksandar Tišma and Imre Kertész left their readers shaken. Their literature proved itself to be mature enough to recount the break with civilisation that was Auschwitz and the horror of war, about the contamination of every square meter of Central European soil with guilt and crime. Younger authors are making accessible historical metropolises, landscapes, and expanses that had lain in the shadow of the Iron Curtain and over which the fog of forgetting had settled. And as already was once seen on the ruins of the Habsburg Empire: The melancholy and grotesque permeate the great Central European literature.

Aleš Šteger

Mercy! Mercy!

Professor, Do You Understand the World?

The collapse of Yugoslavia shows the writing on the wall. It began with the aim to centralise and standardise education policy and culture. It failed. Europe should learn from this. The European Union's tendency to centralise and standardise culture by means of an affirmative policy is obvious. The price is high. Uniformity is moving in where there was once diversity, PR and propaganda where there was once discourse in and about Europe. Europe is threatening to degenerate into an empty phrase, the freedom of culture into farce.

Gemma Pörzgen

Dynamism and Persistence

A European Public and Its Borders

More and more frequently, calls are heard for a European public – and this although it has existed for a long time: as a polyphonic choir of national media that reflects the diversity of Europe and can hardly be managed. But in the

European Commission, there is a strong desire to gain influence within this sphere and to form an EU public. But the numerous media projects here are not without a certain degree of artificiality. Only a few will do justice to the high standards set. The Internet may offer many chances for cross-border discourse, but as a globalised medium, it can hardly be limited to the European Union. Furthermore, there are few persons who could become identification figures for Europe.

Christina Links, Katharina Raabe
"The Literature of Which We Dreamed"

The Book and Ambivalent Outcomes of 1989

The Cold War and the division of Germany had a strong influence on the reception of literature from Eastern Europe. In the German Democratic Republic, the publishing house *Volk & Welt* functioned as a hub for the placement of literature. The systematic and competence of employees were exemplary. Ideological demands and censorship put limits on their work. In the Federal Republic of Germany, there was a complementary reception. It was possible to publish there what was forbidden in the GDR. Individual enthusiasts functioned as intermediaries. The year 1989 was a watershed. While new chances opened up for the publishing houses from the West, those in the East lost their special place. Editors Christina Links and Katharina Raabe discuss bestsellers and under the counter goods, the laws of the market and the loss of expertise, various reader experiences as well as the search for good literature.

Doris Liebermann

"I Understand Only the Man Who Falls"

East European Influences in the Work of H.-H. Grimmeling

Painter Hans-Hendrik Grimmeling was represented at the great Moscow-Berlin exhibition with early murals and a self-portrait that he created while still in the German Democratic Republic. Doris Liebermann spoke with him about his ambivalence towards the state decreed friendship with the Soviet Union, the serious encounter with Russian art and culture, and their influence on his work.

Dobrochna Dabert

The Turning Point

1989 in Polish Film

The overcoming of Communism brought cinema a previously unknown artistic freedom. But expectations that film was the art form that could best depict the break with the past went unfulfilled. The evolutionary character of the "refolution" prevented that. The Round Table in 1989 was not a suitable pendant to the storming of the Bastille in 1789 or the stuff of which films are made. However, if one applies to Polish society the anthropological approach

that stages of human life are marked by rituals of transition, then it is seen that Polish film has expressed the experiences of the break with Communism in all its facets and complexities.

Ivaylo Ditchev

Borderline Cases

Instructions for Use

The Socialist state border was “defended”. Since the end of the East-West conflict, the paradigm is “guard”. Border controls have lost meaning, surveillance procedures have shifted into the interior. Economic, cultural, and political differences have not been abolished. The border is today no longer a sharp line of division, but more a zone where national stereotypes overlap, the flow of goods converges, people meet, an area of contact for imaginary and real differences.

Stefan Auer

Who is afraid of the ‘New Europe’

Nationalism and European Integration since 1989

EU enthusiasts are in danger of contributing to the decline of the European Union. The causes are distorted views about Europe’s past and unrealistic expectations about its future. Integration can no longer be derived from the historical experiences of the founding states, nor are we dealing with a “post-national constellation” in which constitutional patriotism can endow the meaning of integration. The EU of 27 states is more heterogeneous than the European Economic Community of six. But this is not a burden that has to be overcome. Differences and conflicts represent a chance and are the core of what is political. The re-politicisation of the EU is now on the agenda.

Kai-Olaf Lang

Rebellion of the Impatient

Populism in East Central Europe

Populist politicians and parties are meeting with success. They are openly or latently calling into question principles of liberal democracy such as rule of law, pluralism, and protection of minorities. In terms of content, issues, and ideology, populism has many facets. It extends from the extreme right via anti-modern agrarian parties and social populists to left-wing egalitarianism. Most are social-spirited, national-minded, and Euro-sceptic. The populists receive support from the periphery, from the losers in urban centres, and increasingly from the “impeded middle-class” whose hopes have remained unfulfilled. The consensus from the period of the accession to the EU to accept social hardships no longer functions. The success is an indicator for a continuing deficiency in functions within state and administration.

Dorothee Bohle, Béla Greskovits
Economic Miracle and National Debt

On the Political Economy of East Central Europe

The 20 years of democracy and market economics in East Central Europe have been a great success. This distinguishes Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary from almost all of the other post-Socialist states. This model of success has two components. First, these four states succeeded in becoming the manufacturing site for trans-national companies. That creates jobs and brings capital into the region. Second, the governments softened the social hardships of the transformation by means of welfare state policies. The price is an enormous national debt. Since EU accession, it has been necessary to take action against this. Dissatisfaction is growing, and populist forces are finding growing support.

Vladimír Handl

From Soviet Satellite to Integration with the West

Twenty Years of Czech Europe Policy: A Balance

East Central Europe sees itself wedged between Germany and Russia. How to deal with this is a central task of foreign policy. The year 1989 made possible a new answer. "Return to Europe" was the slogan used to introduce orientation towards the West. The balance after 20 years, for the Czech Republic as well as the other countries of the region, is positive: As members of NATO and the EU, they are integrated economically and politically into the Euro-Atlantic area. Nonetheless, in the past few years, there has once again been talk about the "Europe in between".

Aleksander Smolar

The Walls in People's Heads

Memory Culture Divides Europe

With eastern enlargement in 2004 began the successful political and economic integration of Poland and the other East Central European countries into the European Union. But this step has to be followed by another: the rapprochement of Western and Eastern memory culture. For the differing assessments of the Second World War, the Holocaust, the East-West conflict, even the break with Communism of 1989 as well as relations with Russia prevent a true intellectual and cultural integration of the EU.

Robert Brier

Sweeping Lines

On the Historicisation of the Transition around 1989

In East Central and Eastern Europe, the revolutions of 1989 have unleashed a social transition that is strongly oriented on Western modernity. However, it does not express historical determination. Rather, this form of change feeds on the character of the East-West conflict as ideological and cultural debate over the interpretation of modernity.

