

# A b s t r a c t s

## Looking Back Ahead Samizdat, Internet and Freedom of Expression

Barbara J. Falk  
Dissent and Political Theory  
Lessons from East Central Europe

The East Central European dissident movements of the 1970s and 1980s constitute a special chapter in the history of dissenting thinking. They also make a substantial contribution to political theory. The most important legacy of the East Central European dissident movements is the effectiveness of non-violence on political transformation. The experiences of 1989 have "revolutionised" the comparative study of revolutions. But the contribution made by dissident movements is frequently one-dimensional or falsely understood.

Dmitrii Golyenko  
Social Networks in Russia  
Negative Community in a Unnetworked Society

Social networks in Russia seem to be a copy of western role models. In fact, they are a product and reflex of post-Soviet reality. The Internet has become a forum of ideological manipulation. Its main function is to produce hedonistic conformism. Seen politically, social networks are less a place of individual freedom than one of power and discipline. Users conform to orders and codes and thus internalise behavioural models. In Russia, social networks reflect a lack of solidarity in life off-line. In a society that is marked by negative construction of identity – the result of discredited values and widespread cynicism – the community in social networks too often assumes the character of a negative community as well.

Ann Komaromi

### Beyond Gutenberg

The Dynamic of the Dissident Public

Samizdat under Socialism was not monolithic. Publications such as the *Chronicle of Current Events* promoted first and foremost the maintenance of human rights in the Soviet Union. They were dedicated to the journalistic ideal of objectivity and a universalistic understanding of the public sphere. In addition, the samizdat culture also embraced “subjective” projects, many of which were non-political. Diversity created the vitality of samizdat culture, which represented the polar opposite of the regulated uniformity of the official Socialist public sphere. The “pre-Gutenberg” forms of production hindered the control of content and guaranteed the vitality of individual publications.

Wolfgang Eichwede

### “Detente with a Human Face”

The CSCE, Human Rights, and Samizdat

Under the Communist dictatorships of Eastern Europe, room for independent action developed through self-publishing, samizdat. With the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), human rights were enshrined in and legitimised by international law. The conflicts over the validity of human rights that arose in Socialist countries and on the international stage constituted a new chapter in European politics. In retrospect, the human rights activists proved more foresighted and more realistic than the so-called realists. In this respect, the worlds of samizdat remain current.

Henrike Schmidt

### Creative Self-articulation and Prohibition

RuNet and the Samizdat Tradition

Authors and bloggers who publish on the Russian Internet occasionally cast themselves in the tradition of samizdat. Some do it in order to ennobel their own work. Others stylise themselves as the defenders of freedom in the struggle against legal norms and state encroachment in the Internet. If one uses samizdat not as of self-attribution but as analytical category, the similarities and differences between historical and digital samizdat can be seen. Both distinguish themselves by means of a potential resistance to control and censorship. Where accessibility, production form, distribution, and reach are concerned, the structural differences prevail. RuNet offers a space for self-articulation. It is not per se a space for the counter-public sphere, social criticism, or counter-culture.

Peter Reddaway  
Repression and Liberalisation  
Soviet Power and Dissidents, 1953–1986

Political stability in the Soviet Union also depended on the ability of the Communist Party to assert its monopoly on power. Opposition was not foreseen. But dissidents called the party's monopoly on power into question. The regime responded with repression. This ranged from intimidation and ostracism, to confinement in psychiatric facilities and exile. Access to formerly secret sources have made it possible to conclude that the regime's handling of the dissidents was no less influenced by domestic political factors than by the international political climate.

Leonid Luks  
Idea and Identity  
Lines of Tradition in Soviet Dissent

The rise of the dissident movement in the Soviet Union fed on the protest against the interrupted de-Stalinism. At the same time, the mere existence of dissidents was an indicator for the extent of change that had taken place after Stalin's death. The relinquishment of mass terror represented a true revolution from above. Originally, representatives of different ideological currents were to be found among the dissidents. Gradually, ideological disputes within the regime-critical camp increased in acrimony. Two basic currents crystallised. These harkened back to the 19th-century debate between the "Westernisers" and the "Slavophiles."

Natal'ia Konradova, Michail Kaluzhskii  
Russia's Public (Blogo)sphere  
Blogging as Social Practice, Consequences for the Net

In the summer of 2010, bloggers organised citizens' initiatives to fight the fires in Moscow's environs and in doing so revealed the fire-fighting operations of Kremlin sympathizers to be staged. In Russia, where there is a lack of public spheres and discussion culture, the blogosphere is an exclusive space for civil understanding and civic resistance. It acts as a surrogate public sphere. While bloggers intervene in reality, members of the Duma present themselves in on-line social networks. As these spheres begin to overlap the Internet will cease to be a place of socio-cultural autonomy and will revert back into a pure communication technology.

Wolfgang Stephan Kissel

Anti-Canon and Cultural Memory

Samizdat and the Erosion of Socialist Realism

The doctrine of Socialist Realism, which was declared in the 1930s, was the attempt to create a genuinely Soviet cultural memory. Ideologically unsuitable authors and texts were excluded from this canon. The autonomy of literature, however, continued to live in secret: After Stalin's death, samizdat and tamizdat appeared on the scene and created their own anti-canon. The poems of Osip Mandel'shtam occupied a particularly important place, and their effect was increased by the memoirs of his wife Nadezhda Mandel'shtam. The history of how these works were received makes it possible to understand how samizdat contributed to the erosion of official art doctrine.

Malte Rolf

Canon and Anti-Canon

Official Culture and Its Inversion in the Soviet Union

In the 1930s, the Soviet cultural canon took shape. This was accompanied by internal uniformity and isolation from other cultural currents. The canon defined the framework of all official communication right well into the 1990s. With the emergence of the dissidents, this canon began to erode. But the anti-canon of Soviet dissidents, the opposition groups in East Central Europe such as *Solidarność*, and even the independence movements in the Baltic were much more strongly bound to the traditional patterns of official culture than the dissidents themselves realised.

Béla Nóvé

Breaking Out of the Velvet Prison

Censorship and Freedom of the Press in Hungary in the 1980s

Socialism could not do without censorship. In Hungary the regime tried to control political thinking and cultural life by means of a comprehensive system of formal and informal directives, as well as open and covert practices. Resistance was stirred. A productive and diverse brand of samizdat emerged. Its mobilising effect was less than in Poland, but in its intellectual power and its radical commitment to truth and justice, the actions of these dissidents were exemplary and of lasting significance.

Dorothea Wolf

Freedom and Control

The Internet in Belarus and the Idea of Samizdat

The Internet in Belarus was long considered a place free of censorship. Islands of political and cultural counter-public formed. But, with the help of new legal stipulations, the government is trying to control the Internet

more closely. Some bloggers understand their journalistic function as an act of resistance and explicitly cast themselves in the tradition of samizdat. Other bloggers are pro-regime. A pluralism that is seldom seen in the Belarusian mass and print media reigns in the blogosphere.

Rüdiger Ritter

The Illusion of Control and Art

Power, the Ganelin Trio, and Jazz

The Ganelin Trio was the best known ensemble of Soviet avant-garde jazz and a part of the non-conformist art scene. The building up of private networks and clever manoeuvring – which did not exclude cooperation with the system – helped musicians to overcome obstacles of state Socialism.

Heidrun Hamersky

Dissident Movement on Film

The Photographic Work of Ivan Kyncl

Ivan Kyncl is considered the photographer of Charta 77. From 1977 until his emigration in 1980, he documented everyday life of the Prague dissidents. His photos appeared in the West. His body of work achieved its significance through a form of photo-reportage that made visible the regime's repression of different-minded people. His photos are of no less significance for the history of the Czechoslovak human rights movement than leaflets, a petition, or a political appeal.

Jakob Fruchtmann

Storing the Evasive

An Archive of Alternative Thinking in RuNet

The Internet feeds the illusion of an enduring access to sources and documents. But the reality is different. The life expectancy of Russian Internet documents is short, above all when they originate with human rights organisations, social movements, and marginal political opposition groups. This has several causes: The Internet itself is changing dynamically. The technical infrastructure is unstable, the activities of alternative groups are evasive, projects of short duration. The international community of Russia specialists faces the task of how to archive the alternative thinking articulated in RuNet. Setting up such an archive involves considerable expenditure in infrastructure and requires international cooperation.



