



## Eurozine Review

### A savage joke

*Index* follows counter terrorism from the courtroom to the community; *Osteuropa* anticipates a renaissance of Jewish life in eastern Europe; *The Hungarian Quarterly* has it out with eastern European savages; *Dilema veche* goes undercover in Italy; *Host* asks who flies the flag of commitment; *Kulturos barai* deplores toothless journalism; *Akadeemia* celebrates academia; *Magyar Lettre Internationale* debates '68 East and West; and *Fronesis* reads Marx beyond Marxism.

## Index on Censorship 3/2008



*Index* publishes papers resulting from a June conference exploring extremism and freedom of speech in the UK — "an instructive snapshot of the impact of counter terrorism in our lives, from the courtroom to the community", writes editor Jo Glanville. Ken Macdonald, director of public prosecutions, outlines the UK's often disorientating anti-terror legislation introduced post 7/7. This includes the offence of incitement to religious hatred, as well as the glorification of terrorism and the dissemination of terrorist publications.

The latter, states Macdonald, is "intended to cover situations where people are praising acts of terror in a way which, while not encouraging a direct act in response, creates a climate in which people are encouraged to support terrorism." The vagueness of this offence, and of the definition of terrorism itself, attracts strong criticism from panellists. As human rights lawyer Imran Khan states, "Many have been arrested in situations where the nexus between the article or document and terrorism is so loose as to be almost non-existent, in circumstances in which senior counter-terrorism officers have made it plain that they wish to police our thoughts."

Sabin Malik, community cohesion officer in West London, objects to extremism "being seen as solely a Muslim issue" and warns that "extremism is being defined around words and phrases such as 'radical', but you can be a radical and not an extremist, and you can be an extremist, but not a terrorist." Conor Gearty, professor of human rights at the LSE, recalls the political and legal climate during the "Troubles" in Northern Ireland and points out that "debates about race hate and religious hate are the most obvious recent examples of controls on speech that emanate out of a democratic culture". It is not the violent extremists that are being prohibited, argues Gearty, but "the people on the wider periphery of the same mission, who find that their ability to enter into the public arena for discussion and debate is being undermined by the drive from government to address so-called extremism".

**Article 19 turns 60:** *Index* publishes articles commemorating 60 years of the UDHR. Ivan Klíma remembers the Fourth Congress of the Union of Writers in Prague in 1967, at which the editors of *Literární noviny* spoke out against censorship in communist Czechoslovakia; John Mortimer talks about being the defence lawyer at the *Oz* obscenity trial in 1971; and Nobel Peace Prize winner and lawyer Sharin Ebadi speaks in interview about the state of free expression in Iran.

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### Osteuropa 8–10/2008



"The Jews of eastern Europe represent a model for cross-border identity, transnationality, and the transfer of religion, tradition, language, and culture", write the editors of *Osteuropa* in the current issue, entitled: "Impulses for Europe. Traditions and modernity of east European Jewry". Eighty per cent of Jewish people worldwide have eastern European roots, yet how far are the countries of eastern Europe ready to integrate Jewish life and influences into their national commemorative cultures? And what are the chances of a renaissance of Jewish life in eastern Europe?

Everything connected to Jewishness is touched by the aura of the Shoah and thus made "sacrosanct" and "inviolable", regrets Delphine Bechtel in a round table debate. This tendency hinders a progressive, living concept of Jewishness. At the same time, a stereotypical view of Jewish life before the Shoah predominates: "Within the broader western public, there are two prisms: horror (Auschwitz) and kitsch (Klezmer)", as Anna Lipphardt puts it. Since 1989, the study of the history of Jewish life in eastern Europe has received an enormous boost — though this has also brought with it attempts to use "history for the purposes of national self-assertion and apology", says historian Frank Golczewski.

**Lithuania:** More than 94 per cent of the pre-war Jewish population of Lithuania was killed by the Nazis — with the complicity of many Lithuanians. Nevertheless, this history is often only addressed as a result of international pressure. "For some, the study of this history is politically motivated, carried out in the service of Lithuania's international reputation. For others, recollecting the crimes committed by Lithuanians is a matter of morality," writes Vytautas Toleikis.

Toleikis is confident that the younger generation in particular accept Jewish history as a part of Lithuanian history. Yet Robert Fishman calls into question Vilnius's title as European capital of culture in 2009 in the light of recent attempts to charge Jewish anti-Nazi partisans for war crimes committed in 1944. "A country in which anti-Semitic propaganda in politics, justice and the media is so widespread does not deserve such an accolade", Fishman writes in a text first published in *Die Jüdische*.

The English edition of this issue of *Osteuropa* will be published at the end of October.

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## The Hungarian Quarterly 191 (2008)



In *The Hungarian Quarterly*, the playwright and essayist [László Végel](#) writes despairingly on Serbian politics as a member of the Hungarian minority in Vojvodina, northern Serbia. He is scathing of the coalition between Boris Tadic's Democratic Party and the Serbian Socialist Party following the July 2008 elections: "The masqueraders [...] are irritating a substantial portion of the populace. They are watching the antics in disbelief, because the very people who only yesterday were accusing each other of high treason and betrayal are today feasting on the lamb together."

Yet, despite vigorous campaigning in Vojvodina by Viktor Orbán (leader of Hungary's centre-right Fidesz party), ethnic Hungarians in Serbia have been abandoning the minority parties and voting for the more liberal, Belgrade-based parties in Serbia. At the same time, they unconditionally support the Right in Hungary itself. "I am reminded of the savage in the joke who is asked what he thinks is the worst thing in the world and to be disapproved of most. He replies, when an outside tribe lays waste to our tents and makes away with our women. So what is the best thing? When we lay waste to the tents of the neighbouring tribe and make away with their women."

**Imre Nagy tapes:** András Mink, deputy director of the Open Society Archives in Budapest and editor of *Beszélő*, discusses what the recently publicized tape recordings of the trial of Hungarian prime minister Imre Nagy in 1958 adds to what was already known about the events. Nagy, a reformist who supported Hungary's withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact in 1956, was subsequently executed for treason. Previously released records have established that the Soviets would have approved of a lesser punishment for him and his co-defendants and that it was above all the Kádár government that was determined to have Nagy put to death. Among other things, the tapes add some insight into their motivation:

"In their words, in their histrionics, and the cadences of their voices, even after half a century, the deep loathing that they felt towards their victims is clearly discernible. [...] These were the cadres that in 1956 had been forced to face the horror of losing power and privileges — precisely because they had shown themselves to be unfit, both politically and morally, to hold authority and power in Hungary. [...] Those men were living proof that there was an alternative [...]. That was why the defendants had to be destroyed and gagged."

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## Dilema veche 241 (2008)



This September, a group of Romanian journalists took part in an experiment called "Journalist in Romania — Gypsy in Italy" in an attempt to find out how discrimination against Romanian Roma living in Italy manifests itself. Dressed like Roma, they discovered that the situation was somewhat different to the image created by the press. Not once were they harassed in the streets on the basis of their ethnic origin, and their access to public institutions was in no way restricted.

The journalists also visited two Roma camps near Rome and Naples. They found that the inhabitants were appreciative of the help offered by both the local citizens and the authorities. Though the living standards are better in the official camp, Via Santa Maria, in both camps there is an overall lack of prospects, the population's main concern being what to wear and eat over the next twenty-four hours.

**Public opinion:** Dana Enulescu, writes that for Italians, the Roma represent the perfect savage: homeless, criminal, drunken, and violent. And Tereza Barta protests against Europe's fascination with Romania's ugly side.

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### Host 07/2008



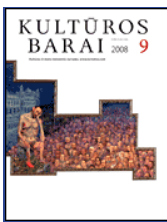
The current issue of Czech magazine *Host* deals with social commitment in literature. Who, asks Milena M. Maresová, is the flag bearer of "commitment" in a system not in the grip of totalitarian ideology? Given that any written statement of opinion can be called "committed", we can determine a group from which "commitment" can be expected to a higher degree: journalists. These "people of the public pen" must be the watchmen over the topics about which it is worth raising one's voice, writes Maresová.

Umberto Eco once wrote: "We want a policeman to find out who does this and that, but we want an intellectual, a philosopher, to embody expectations, yearnings and passions of their time." Elie Wiesel, writer, activist and Nobel laureate, has been asking himself the same questions since the beginning of his career in 1946: Can a journalist have any inner life? Is anybody who has survived the Holocaust entitled to be happy? Karel Hvízdala discusses Wiesel's work in an article on "Silence, freedom, context and the criterion of reason".

**Also:** Eva Kanturková, Michal Viewegh, and Milos Urban — all writers who have declared a political stand in their books — on literature and commitment; an interview with the Slovak singer Lucia Piussi; and articles dealing with the singular artistic project of Katerina Sedá.

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### Kultūros barai 09/2008



Lithuanians are told that their culture is idealistic, spiritual, and devoutly Catholic, that their neighbourly love has been inherited from their ancestors, and so on. Yet it is obvious that everyday values are determined by money, writes [Tomas Kavaliauskas](#). A cynical attitude towards social accountability is flourishing in business and politics. Meanwhile, journalists frame unpleasant questions in the abstract terminology of the "liberal West": "freedom of the word", "democracy", "order", and "justice". The result: they are no longer feared.

The façade of Lithuanian political ideology has changed dramatically in the last two decades, writes Kristupas Sepkus. Ideas that in the past could have

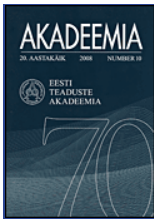
seen one sent into exile, prison or a psychiatric clinic today can earn one a medal. But there is one but: those handing out the medals were the ones that handed out the punishments in the past.

An active discussion of the social barriers blocking Lithuanian women's careers in the social and cultural sectors began during the second half of the last century. Today, the "glass ceiling" in Lithuanian academic music is steadily vanishing, writes Asta Parkarklyte. Professional segregation between the specialties of women and men in the field is decreasing with every new generation.

**In translation:** In the Eurozine series "[Literary perspectives](#)", [Daniela Strigl](#) finds contemporary Austrian literature at the top of its game; and Hungarian sociologist [Elemér Hankiss](#) blames the political elite for Hungarians' pessimism about the future of their country.

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### Akadeemia 10/2008



The Estonian Academy of Sciences is celebrating a double anniversary in 2008 — the ninetieth anniversary of the Republic of Estonia as well as the passage of seven decades since the foundation of the academy. In a detailed issue, *Akadeemia* recounts the history of the academy, its changing role within the Estonian society and under Soviet rule, as well as its new status as a gauge in an ever-changing world.

**Road to success:** An analysis of Estonian research reveals a remarkably rapid development, writes Ain Heinaru. Estonia is expected to reach international level within the next few years, with the aim of being among the top dozen in the world before long. The optimism is based on the sheer speed with which academic research in the country has developed.

**Wishful thinking:** The problem of what pseudoscience is and how to distinguish it from genuine or *bona fide* science is not merely academic or philosophical, but very practical, and indeed more serious than the question about whether or not to believe in horoscopes, writes Peeter Saari. He concludes with a quotation from the American naturalist Edwin Teale: "It is morally as bad not to care whether a thing is true or not, so long as it makes you feel good, as it is not to care how you got your money, so long as you have got it."

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### Magyar Lettre Internationale 70 (2008)



*Magyar Lettre Internationale's* '68 issue includes a translation of [Chris Reynolds'](#) searching [essay](#) on the unanswered questions behind the increasingly stereotyped version of May '68. What exactly was the role of the police in the escalation of the violence, including the much-overlooked fatalities in June? Why did the Renault factory workers reject the concessions obtained in the Grenelle agreements? And was de

Gaulle on the point of stepping down when he went to Baden-Baden?

Also from Eurozine's feature "[Beyond soixante–huit](#)", [Mykola Riabchuk](#) describes how the politics of the Prague Spring filtered through to the Ukraine until the crackdown on "Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism" in 1972–73; and how, during perestroika, the roles were reversed and he was able to bring banned literature to friends in Czechoslovakia. Here, he recalls the moment he "became a Czech and a Slovak":

"As soon as I got interested in ice hockey, I noticed that neither my father nor uncle had ever supported the mighty Soviet team. [...] Even though the Soviets seemed to be unbeatable at the time, we hoped with all our hearts, souls, and guts that they would be beaten. When this finally happened, when the miraculous Czechoslovakian team did crush them in the 1969 World Cup, we were in heaven. We cried, shook hands, and kissed one another; we were both Czechs and Slovaks at the time and we felt revenged for everything."

**Also:** [Jakub Patočka](#), [Jacques Rupnik](#), and [Aleksander Smolar](#) conclude that the commemoration of '68 in eastern Europe gives those countries an opportunity to review the conditions of the transition from 1989 onwards; [Serge Audier](#) argues that critical views of '68 have become as much of a ritual as celebratory accounts before them; and [György Konrád](#) takes an ironic look at the '68ers from the perspective of a '56er.

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### Fronesis 28 (2008)



*Fronesis* dedicates its current issue to Marx, the editors stating in their introduction that "in a discussion on globalization, class polarization, and on the exploitation of capitalism, Marx's critique of economy will always be topical".

Daniel Ankarloo accuses leftist Swedish economists of having stopped reading Marx two or three decades ago. Making reference neither to Marx's oeuvre nor to contemporary secondary literature, they nevertheless nonchalantly discard his theory of economy. A different approach, writes Ankarloo, is the theory of Temporal Single System Interpretation (TSSI). Two of its proponents, Andrew Kliman and Alan Freeman, are represented with articles in this issue.

Swedish sociologist Anders Ramsay, wondering which Marx is usually referred to, suggests four phases of reading and interpreting Marx, starting with the one now known as "orthodox Marxism". This was followed by "humanist Marxism" and, in the 1960s, by a third phase that had discovered Marx's lesser-known work, especially the critiques of economy. The fourth phase started after the collapse of the Soviet Union and is still ongoing. Ramsay describes it as "hermeneutically and philologically more sensitive towards inconsistencies and imperfection within Marx's texts". Time has finally come for a reception of Marx, not "'beyond Marx' (Negri)", but "beyond Marxism".

**Also:** [Michael Heinrich](#) on the theory of monetary value and — topically — Marx's theory of the credit system as the control centre of capitalist production.

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