Title

In the Shadow of Ideology: Art and Art History Facing Post-communist Transformation in Central and Eastern Europe
An Introduction

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Source

MIEJSCE 10/2024

URL

https://miejsce.asp.waw.pl/en/w-cieniu-ideologii/

In 2010, Maja and Reuben Fowkes declared:

> It seems that the complexes about East and West, the passion and recriminations, which so dominated the art discourse of the 1990s, have finally been surpassed. The field is now open for both artists and art historians to interfere with the code, since – in difference to the situation during the era of modernism – the globalised meta-language of art is not owned by the West anymore.[1]

Maja and Reuben Fowkes referred to this moment as the era of "post-transition." Today, however – when the light has not only failed (to echo the title of the influential 2019 book by Ivan Krastev and Stephen Holmes[2]), but the bulb itself has been shattered and its fragments trampled underfoot – their declaration from just a few years earlier sounds unrealistically optimistic. At the time, though, the light of liberal democracy was still clearly visible, even if, as Maja and Reuben Fowkes pointed out, the uncritical belief in a transformative utopia had already given way to a more sober appraisal of reality.[3] But is this not, after all, how mature democracies behave – those very democracies we were so determined to join?

The text by Maja and Reuben Fowkes was originally published in Poland, in the volume *History of Art History in Central, Eastern, and Southeastern Europe*.[4] In 2018, it was reprinted in the anthology *Art and Theory of Post-1989 Central and Eastern Europe*, edited by New York's MoMA. In line with Maja and Reuben Fowkes's own diagnosis, this republication can be seen as a result of the "opening of the field." The volume, edited by Ana Janevski, Roxana Marcoci, and Ksenia Nouril, comprises 76 texts and interviews, the majority of which are reprints from the 1990s and – above all – the first two decades of the twenty-first century. This allows the MoMA anthology – with contributions from such key authors as Edit András, Boris Groys, Klara Kemp-Welch, Bojana Pejić, Piotr Piotrowski, Alina Șerban, and Igor Zabel – to be read as a representative survey of the most significant approaches to the topic in question.

However, the project by Janevski, Marcoci, and Nouril also seems to bear witness to a "transformation of the field" at a moment when the light of liberal democracy was beginning to dim. On the one hand, the large number of secondary texts allows – almost inevitably – for a revisiting of the central themes of art and art history of the 1990s and 2000s: identity, nationalism, gender, globalization, and democracy. On the other hand, what becomes clear is an interpretive shift. The post-communist transformation is no longer understood only in terms of the superstructure but is increasingly analyzed through the base – that is, the underlying economic and social relations.

How clear is it? Various forms of the word "culture" appear 831 times in the anthology, "gender" 401 times, "democracy/democrat" 250 times, and "neoliberal/neoliberalism" 57 times. The latter term occurs in 23 of the texts and interviews (out of 76), with seven instances relating to pieces commissioned specifically for the volume (introductions and chapter summaries), and eleven appearing in materials produced no earlier than five years prior to the anthology's publication. The remaining five texts date from 2005, 2006, 2009, 2010, and 2011.

Of course, such quantitative tallies must be approached with appropriate caution – not least because they do not account for the contexts in which these terms appear. At the same time, even this basic numerical data reveals a certain truth about the discipline: a gradual yet consistent increase in the art historical engagement with the material dimensions of post-communist transformation.

This marks a tectonic shift. As Boris Buden demonstrated in his seminal works, the "ideological hub" of post-communist discourse was the notion of democracy.[5] It was through this framing that the transformation could be presented not in the terms of political economy (the global expansion of capitalism), but rather through the lens of cultural difference.[6] In this view, the perceived civilizational deficiencies of post-communist countries were understood as cultural in nature – conservatism, religiosity, misogyny, and so on – rather than economic, resulting from the restructuring of property relations and the dismantling of the commons. According to this narrative, neoliberalism appeared as nothing more than the natural extension of democracy: unquestionable and without alternatives. Art history, too, long failed to recognize the violence inherent in neoliberalism.

Recent research no longer avoids the term "neoliberalism." Among the topics addressed are capitalist modernization,[7] artistic labor,[8] neoliberal extractivism,[9] artistic representations of the worker in post-socialism,[10] the region's transhistorical identity,[11] archival potentiality,[12] war and revolution,[13] Marxist art history,[14] and – arguably the most thoroughly examined –the shifts in cultural policy and the organization of artistic life across the various states of the former Eastern Bloc.[15] Despite their differences, what these studies share is that, whether implicitly or explicitly, they move beyond both liberal and neoliberal doxa.[16]

Against this backdrop, a special place is occupied by Octavian Esanu's 2021 book *The Postsocialist Contemporary*.[17] Esanu's undeniable contribution lies in demonstrating that after 1989 the aims, diagnoses, and methods of art history were not only an emanation of the episteme of transformation ideology but also actively served its interests. Contemporary art was perceived as an indispensable

element of the open society, and consequently, its unfettered development was regarded as one of the conditions for the success of the post-socialist transformation. History functioned as part of this process. On the one hand, it thus adopted the dominant discourses of post-communism, such as capitalist modernization, transition to democracy, and developmentalism; on the other hand, it ignored the material conditions of new art.[18]

This issue of *Miejsce* situates itself within the theoretical horizon outlined above, though it does not limit itself to it. Its primary aim is to initiate reflection on topics, attitudes, and phenomena that exceeded the epistemic frameworks of art history in the 1990s and 2000s. This includes both new interpretations of works, exhibitions, and institutions often assumed to hold an established place in the relevant literature, as well as analyses of phenomena that have so far lacked in-depth study. Equally important is the reflection on the history and theory of art. This reflection proceeds along two tracks: on one hand, by historicizing the narratives and discourses dominant during the transformation; on the other, by implementing theoretical approaches that could not be accommodated within the previous paradigm.

Agata Jakubowska analyzes two exhibitions of Polish women artists curated by Agnieszka Morawińska in 1991: *Polish Women Artists* (National Museum in Warsaw) and its lesser-known American iteration, *Voices of Freedom: Exhibition of Polish Women Artists at the Beginning of the 1990s* (National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, D.C.). The author meticulously reconstructs the genesis of both exhibitions and subsequently examines their reception, highlighting the epistemic boundaries of discourse surrounding feminist art in the early 1990s. As Jakubowska demonstrates, the reception of *Polish Women Artists* was shaped predominantly by attitudes toward feminism. The majority of viewers perceived feminism as an unnecessary "ideologization" of art – a factor that hindered the valuation of "purely artistic" qualities. A few dissenting voices appreciated Morawińska's approach yet, in line with the transformative logic of "catching up," considered it belated compared to Western debates. Meanwhile, the reception of *Voices of Freedom* was framed within post-Cold War narratives, foremost among them the universalization of the concept of liberal "freedom." Jakubowska points out that a blind spot in both readings was anti-communism – the emancipatory aspects of state socialism were ignored by both organizers and audiences, thereby obstructing the tracing of continuity in Polish feminist thought within the field of art.

Zuzanna Andruszko analyzes the significance of male homoeroticism in narratives of Polish art history during the transformation period. The author posits that, in the dominant narrative, male homosexuality and homoeroticism prior to 1989 became both anti-communist and, in a sense, liberal *avant la lettre* formations. This allowed for the interpretation as well as the construction of a Polish "gay art" of the transformation era. Central to this process was the mythologization of 1989 as a moment of inevitable transition to "normality." At the heart of the new narrative stood the queer liberal subject – one who can be incorporated into dominant social frameworks without fundamentally disrupting their functioning. As the author notes, the figure of the attractive, naked male became a symbol of civilizational progress, and the presence of such bodies in art served as a barometer of democratization not only within the artistic sphere but also the public one. Andruszko historicizes this

narrative as an element of American soft power, drawing attention to the fact that art history not only naturalized it but indeed idealized it; she also points out that the model of the exemplary queer citizen (Jasbir Puar) within art history was based on exclusions related to class, gender, and nationality.

Jitka Šosová demonstrates how the ideological coordinates of the transformation influenced the construction of the canon of postwar Czechoslovak art. The author points out that a subtle reinterpretation of the concept of "objectivity" in scholarship was crucial here: while before 1989 the ideal of pure, apolitical science allowed scholars to distance themselves from the official ideology of the socialist state, after the systemic change it aligned with the reluctance of many researchers to embrace new methodologies. As a result, Czech art history continued to rely primarily on the category of style and its evolution, with the idea of formal progress now resonating with broader societal expectations of development toward liberal democracy and a market economy. Šosová analyzes in this context the historicization of particular phenomena in postwar Czechoslovak art, paying special attention to four symbolic figures: anti-communism, authenticity, individualism, and the West. As she notes, attachment to these values enabled the removal of art from the era of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic from the realm of universal history (in favor of individual artistic explorations), and subsequently allowed selected examples (such as the experimental art of the 1960s and dissident art of the 1970s and 1980s) to be presented within a logic of teleological progress and as a "prefiguration" of the advent of liberal democracy and, with it, a new art.

Karolina Majewska-Güde formulates a call for the revitalization of archives related to the post-communist transformation. Her starting point is the archive of the Faience Department at the Museum of Kujawy and Dobrzyń Land, on the basis of which she reconstructs the concept of the never-realized "Fajans" Museum. Majewska-Güde activates the archive in the spirit of Ariella Aïsha Azoulay, uncovering the potential history of the Włocławek factory. However, she does so not merely (or not only) by invoking fantasy or imagination (as in decolonial projects), but by moving beyond the dominant discourses of memory culture and historical politics prevalent in Polish historiography. A meticulous analysis of the preserved documents reveals a vision of an institution that values the work of female artists – faience painters – as well as a political project in which art, promoted by state and regional cultural institutions, is understood as labor. On the other hand, the archive exposes a counter-history of transformation as a force not so much building a new order, but rather annihilating the old one. Based on this, the author poses a speculative question about the contemporary relevance of the "Fajans" Museum project – as a museum of women's labor understood in an egalitarian sense.

Karolina Wilczyńska analyzes the operation of Jacek Markiewicz's a.r.t. gallery in Płock from 1992 to 1997. Until now, the a.r.t. gallery has held an important, though not primary, position in research on Polish art of the 1990s –it was primarily regarded as a venue where artists associated with the so-called critical art movement exhibited. Wilczyńska examines Markiewicz's gallery as an infrastructure entangled in the contradictions of capitalism. Jacek Markiewicz was the owner of a plastic packaging wholesale business, which was supposed to provide financial and political independence for the gallery and for him as an artist. Wilczyńska demonstrates that the operational model of the a.r.t.

gallery reveals the illusory nature of the separation between labor and art under capitalism – as she points out, the autonomy of art is always dependent on surplus capital generated through typical market activities. To expose this mechanism, Wilczyńska employs the concept of speculation (Marina Vishmidt), which helps capture the convergences between the contemporary art field and the logic of late capitalist financialization. Seen in this light, the a.r.t. gallery can be viewed as an enterprise engaged in speculating on symbolic value, managed by Jacek Markiewicz – an entrepreneur of himself (Pierre Dardot and Christian Laval).

Kacper Solecki and Łucja Staszkiewicz approach post-communist transformation as a metonymy for gender transition. Their analysis centers on two series by Alicja Żebrowska – *Onone. The World After the World* (1995–1999) and *When the Other Becomes One's Own* (1998–2002) – as well as their critical reception. In both works, the figure of the trans woman plays a central role. Solecki and Staszkiewicz point out that poststructuralist art history tended to strip transfemininity of its material conditions, reducing it to an allegory of the democratization of the public sphere. According to them, the epistemic horizon here is shaped by a liberal vision of emancipation – one that can occur through increased visibility of marginalized individuals in media, on billboards, or in art galleries. As a result, the trans woman became not simply an "Other," but a figure of "absolute otherness" (Emma Heaney) – positioned outside of society and perceived as destabilizing it in various ways. Solecki and Staszkiewicz argue that viewing non-normative bodies as objects devoid of agency enabled the bypassing of reflection on the material – often dramatic – conditions of trans existence in a transforming Poland. In their view, this would not have been possible without art history's dominant belief in the political agency of representation.

Júliusz Huth analyzes the impact of economic and political transformations on the structure of the Hungarian art field (Pierre Bourdieu). Beginning with a detailed account of the dismantling of the state-run art system of the Hungarian People's Republic, Huth reveals the material foundations of the culture wars of the 1990s and 2000s. As he demonstrates, the elimination of socialist patronage and the privatization of its associated institutions significantly worsened the material conditions of many artists – much like those of other public-sector workers. This was particularly true for artists committed to a traditional understanding of art, many of whom had belonged to the Hungarian Association of Fine and Applied Artists (*Magyar Képzőművészek és Iparművészek Szövetsége*) before 1989 and had worked on state commissions. At the same time, symbolic power shifted to former members of the dissident avant-garde and, after 1989, to proponents of a curatorial-managerial model of contemporary art – internationally oriented and broadly sympathetic to the market. In this way, an economic conflict was reframed as a political one, and the frustration of those left behind by the transformation of the Hungarian art field was taken up by national-conservative forces. Huth traces this struggle through the example of the Budapest Palace of Art (*Budapesti Műcsarnok*), which in 1995 came under the leadership of László Beke—one of the most influential art historians and curators of the avant-garde during the socialist period and, after 1989, a central figure in the Hungarian art world.

The transformation of the Hungarian art system – this time through a case study –is also explored by **Réka Deim**. Her analysis focuses on Artéria Galéria, one of the first commercial galleries officially registered in Hungary. Deim examines the opportunities and challenges brought about by the liberalization of Hungarian cultural policy, which began in the 1980s and continued into the following decade. For the founders of Artéria Galéria – a creative community (*alkotóközösség*) of 22 artists – the marketization of artistic production in the Hungarian People's Republic offered the possibility of selling their own works independently of the state-run art trade enterprise (*Képcsarnok Vállalat*). During its early years (1986–1992), Artéria Galéria successfully combined an ambitious, diverse program with a commercial offer. However, as Deim points out, the liberalization of the art system also intensified tensions within art communities that had previously operated under the egalitarian conditions of socialist patronage. Competitiveness became an issue within Artéria Galéria itself, and the members' lack of market experience only exacerbated financial conflicts. This ultimately led to a crisis and the dissolution of the gallery in its original form – from 1995 onward, Artéria Galéria operated on fully commercial terms. A similar transformation reshaped the entire state-supported art market sector across post-communist countries.

Natalia Słaboń analyzes the impact of the post-communist transformation on the functioning of public institutions, using the case of the Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź. The article focuses on the directorship of Jaromir Jedliński (1991–1996), who succeeded Ryszard Stanisławski. Słaboń presents the new director as an advocate of a free-market approach to cultural governance. She reconstructs his management model based on the holdings of the museum's institutional archive. As she shows, Jedliński prioritized improvements to the museum's infrastructure but, above all, maintaining the programmatic standards established by his legendary predecessor. Faced with budget cuts in the cultural sector and the museum's shift to austerity measures, Jedliński proposed staff reductions. A particularly valuable contribution of the article lies in its reconstruction of employee sentiment – based on an analysis of internal documents and correspondence. Słaboń characterizes the atmosphere among the staff as grim: employees did not understand the director's personnel decisions, which ultimately led to an open conflict with the local branch of the NSZZ "Solidarność" union. The article highlights the structural nature of these tensions: while the museum's leadership (supported by the artistic community) focused on maintaining a high artistic standard, the staff prioritized timely salary payments and stable employment conditions.

The article by **Maksymilian Wroniszewski** constitutes the first comprehensive study of the work of Gdańsk artist Marek "Rogulus" Rogulski, who debuted in the mid-1980s and was active in the following decade. Rogulski was among numerous artists who, during the transformation, drew inspiration from broadly understood esotericism (shamanism, mysticism, astrology, etc.). Wroniszewski discusses both individual works by Rogulski and the programmatic assumptions behind them. As he shows, a central concept in Rogulski's vocabulary was energy – a mystical force that permeates all creation and constitutes a kind of fundamental building block of the universe. Wroniszewski emphasizes that this allowed Rogulski to formulate a completely different understanding of the work of art than that found in the critical tradition, with which he openly

polemicized: here, the artist's task is to capture transcendent energy, transform it according to their own sensitivity, and then convey it to the recipient. According to the author, such a conception of the artwork enabled Rogulski to maintain a holistic vision of the world. This stance seems especially meaningful if we consider the transformation as an unprecedented process of disintegration of the existing reality, and regard its overarching consequence as the collapse of all social wholes.

The issue is supplemented by reviews, interviews, and visual material. **Kristóf Nagy** discusses **Larissa Buchholz's** book *The Global Rules of Art: The Emergence and Divisions of a Cultural World Economy* (Princeton University Press, 2022), highlighting its usefulness for research on the art field in Central and Eastern Europe. As he points out, the publication makes it possible, among other things, to view this field as part of a much broader whole – both before 1989/1991 (structural similarities between Eastern and Western welfare regimes for artists) and after the systemic change (the neoliberalization and globalization of art).

Meanwhile, **Arkadiusz Półtorak** analyzes the anthology of texts by **Ewa Mikina**, *Słów brak* [No Words] (Muzeum Sztuki w Łodzi, Galeria Miejska Arsenał, 2023). Mikina (1951–2012) was one of the few critics who paid attention to the economic dimension of the transformation, and perhaps for this reason, her work remained overlooked for a long time. Półtorak offers a close reading of the critic's texts, foregrounding her call for speaking/writing frankly.

In a conversation with the telling title *The Time of Individualists Has Come*, **Zuzanna Wilska** interviews **Joanna Kiliszek and Andrzej Rosołek** about their work running Galeria Dziekanka in Warsaw from 1987 to 1992. Wilska is interested in a general picture of the artistic life during that period, but she pays particular attention to the queer exhibition by **Piotr Nathan** and **Hunter Reynolds** in May 1991. The statements by Kiliszek and Rosołek compose a vivid account of queer Warsaw in the early 1990s, simultaneously serving as an invaluable source for further research on the topic.

Uschi Klein conducted an interview with Romanian artist Dan Perjovschi about his activity at the turn of the 1980s and 1990s. The conversation nuances the narrative outlined by Octavian Esanu in *The Postsocialist Contemporary*. Perjovschi speaks candidly: "What is the problem with the Soros Foundation or the Open Society concept? I love it. […] The Soros Foundation helped us to recover, build a network of social and cultural activists, and connected us to a world network so we aren't alone. The fact that the actual tyrants and the extreme right hate Soros is a sign he did well."

In the Visual Turn section, we present a selection of works by **Piotr Uklański** from the early 1990s. In his commentary, **Jakub Banasiak** treats them, on one hand, as an archive of the potentialities of transformation (Łucja Iwanczewska), and on the other, as a collection of figures that can be retroactively read as symbols of change or duality. He interprets them as weird (Mark Fisher) – strange symptoms of transformation, its unexpected afterimages.

Although the texts gathered in this issue of *Miejsce* differ in many respects, it seems possible to formulate several general conclusions regarding potential future research on art and art history during

the transformation period.

First, the dominance of poststructuralism under the banner of New Art History should be understood within the horizon of the ideological principles of transformation.[19] The collected analyses show that interpretations focused on representation and its symbolic functions neglected the material conditions of artistic production related to the dismantling of state patronage, the privatization of healthcare, and deindustrialization. It is no coincidence, therefore, that the application of theoretical approaches inspired by Marxism made it possible to perceive these dependencies, as well as to specify previously non-adjective theories and notions as liberal or neoliberal (liberal feminism, queer liberal subject, entrepreneurial subject) (Kacper Solecki and Łucja Staszkiewicz, Karolina Wilczyńska, Zuzanna Andruszko).

Secondly, there is a noticeable reevaluation of the archive, which in the humanities of the 1990s and 2000s was regarded with suspicion as a potential site of symbolic knowledge-power. Piotr Piotrowski's declaration can be considered programmatic here: "I am sensitive to dust and do not feel comfortable in archives."[20] All the texts collected in this issue rely on primary research in one way or another, thus uncovering threads impossible to grasp within the poststructuralist paradigm. If the archive is critiqued, it is done in the spirit of Ariella Aïsha Azoulay – as an instrument of imperial hegemony that nevertheless harbors invaluable potential histories. Seen from this perspective, the archives of transformation allow us to expose neoliberal violence within the art field, while also preserving from oblivion the project of socialist emancipation (Karolina Majewska-Güde, Natalia Słaboń).

Thirdly, de-essentializing the assumptions underlying post-1989 art history enables the formulation of a project tentatively called the "history of art history" of the transformation period. Its core lies in historicizing the epistemic frameworks of the discipline, and consequently uncovering the ideological background of dominant methodologies, theoretical approaches, valuations, interpretations, and so forth –as well as the disputes surrounding them. This applies not only to art history produced for the purposes of *The Postsocialist Contemporary*, but also to the writing of art history created before 1989 (Agata Jakubowska, Zuzanna Andruszko, Jitka Šosová).

Fourthly and finally, moving away from the ideological principles of transformation has revealed the illusory nature of the 1989 rupture. As Boris Buden and Octavian Esanu have shown, the function of the 1989 turning point goes far beyond mere periodization: it is essentially a historiosophical symbol of a New Beginning, a zero point from which education for maturity and responsibility can begin. On the other hand, the date 1989 allows for the dehistoricization of communism, presenting it as a non-history. Ultimately, it is a symbol of capital's victory over labor. The texts gathered in this issue demonstrate (explicitly or implicitly) that in art historiography, this date also served a strictly ideological function. In other words, art history needs to consider the gradual and ongoing nature of the post-communist transformation – unless the narrative remains unaware of its own ideological entanglements (Zuzanna Andruszko, Réka Deim, Júliusz Huth, Karolina Majewska-Güde, Jitka Šosová, Maksymilian Wroniszewski).

Of course, the art historical perspective proposed here – like any other – is inherently political. Therefore, at the end, I would like to highlight the more immediate stakes of this issue of Miejsce. Recognizing ideology-as-ideology is the first sign of its declining hegemony. It seems that the changes in art history discussed at the beginning of this text should also be linked to the erosion of liberal democracy. That is why the response we formulate to the advancing darkness is so crucial. Ivan Krastev and Stephen Holmes remain within the liberal paradigm – they argue that the crisis of Western democracy is primarily symbolic and identity-based. From the perspective adopted here, cultural issues must be considered in dialectical tension with the material base. I share Octavian Esanu's view that "genuine processes of democratization must also account for the democratic control over the means of production and the process of economic accumulation. Without economic equality there is no political equality."[21] The ideological illusion has long prevented us from seeing that the condition of liberal freedom is real inequalities. This also applies to our discipline. Therefore, a truly "post-transformation" art history must always keep in mind the material conditions of its own existence.[22]

Translation by Karol Waniek

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5. Boris Buden, *Transition to Nowhere: Art in History after 1989* (Berlin: Archive Books, 2020), 335. See also pages 255–64 and chapter 5, “In the Nowhere of Democracy.” ↩
6. Ibid., 37. ↩
7. Octavian Esanu, ed., *Contemporary Art and Capitalist Modernization: A Transregional Perspective* (New York: Routledge, 2021). See also Beata Hock, “Evolving Networks: International Sponsors of Post-socialist Art Scenes,” *Journal of Contemporary Central and Eastern Europe* 31, no. 1 (2023): 95–108; Kristóf Nagy, “From Fringe Interest to Hegemony: The Emergence of the Soros Network in Eastern Europe,” in *Globalizing East European Art Histories: Past and Present*, eds. A. Allas and B. Hock (New York: Routledge, 2018). ↩

8. Katja Praznik, *Art Work: Invisible Labor and the Legacy of Yugoslav Socialism* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2021). ↩
9. M. Fowkes and R. Fowkes, eds., *Ilona Németh: Eastern Sugar* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2021). ↩
10. Raino Isto, “Representing the Worker in Postsocialist Public Space: Art and Politics under Neoliberalism,” *International Labor and Working-Class History* 98 (2020): 43–76. ↩
11. Andrzej Szczerski, *Transformacja. Sztuka w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej po 1989 roku* [Transformation: Art in Central and Eastern Europe after 1989] (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2019). ↩
12. Łucja Iwanczewska, *Potencjalności transformacji: Krótkie trwanie performansów kulturowych w Polsce lat 90.* [The Potentialities of Transformation: The Short Duration of Cultural Performances in 1990s Poland] (Warsaw: Instytut Badań Literackich PAN, 2022). ↩
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14. Magdalena Radomska, “How to Follow Marx with Class? Transformation and Marxist Analysis of Post-Communist Art in a Post-Communist Europe,” in *The Routledge Companion to Marxisms in Art History*, eds. T. Tunalı and B. Winkenweder (New York: Routledge, 2025); Milena Bartlová, “Marxistické dějiny umění: direktivní model, nebo radikální inspirace?” *Sešit pro umění, teorii a příbuzné zóny* 29 (2020): 11–37. ↩
15. Jakub Banasiak, *Proteuszowe czasy. Rozpad państwowego systemu sztuki 1982–1993. Stan wojenny, druga odwilż, transformacja ustrojowa* [Proteus Times: The Dismantling of the State Art System 1982–1993. Martial Law, the Second Thaw, the Transformation] (Warsaw: Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw and Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, 2020); Irfan Hošić, *Slika krize: Kulturne i umjetničke prilike u Bosni i Hercegovini 1990–2020* [Image of Crisis: Cultural and Artistic Conditions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1990–2020] (Sarajevo: Buybook, 2024); *Art, Society and Politics in (Post)Socialism*, ed. A. Lazea (Timișoara: Universitatii de Vest, 2015); Karolina Łabowicz-Dymanus, *Synchronizacja w Sieci. Centra Sztuki Współczesnej Sorosa – cztery modele: Budapeszt, Kijów, Tallinn* [Synchronization in the Network: Soros Centers for Contemporary Art – Four Models: Budapest, Kyiv, Tallinn, Warsaw] (Warsaw: Institute of Art, Polish Academy of Sciences, 2016); *Art for Change 1985–2015*, ed. M. Vassileva (Sofia: Sofia City Art Gallery and Military Publishing House, 2015). ↩
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17. Ocatvian Esanu, *The Postsocialist Contemporary: The Institutionalization of Artistic Practice in Eastern Europe After 1989* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2021). ↩

18. This is, of course, a classical issue. On this topic see: Fredric Jameson, *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981); Slavoj Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (London: Verso, 1989); Krzysztof Świrek, *Teorie ideologii na przecięciu marksizmu i psychoanalizy* [Theories of Ideology at the Intersection of Marxism and Psychoanalysis] (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2018). ↩
19. On the global expansion of New Art History after the fall of communism, see: James Elkins, *The End of Diversity in Art Historical Writing: North Atlantic Art History and Its Alternatives* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2021). ↩
20. Katarzyna Bojarska, Adam Mazur, and Luiza Nader, *Miłość do emancypacji. O warsztacie i zaangażowaniu badacza-humanisty z Piotrem Piotrowskim* [Love for Emancipation: On the Workshop and Engagement of the Humanist-Researcher with Piotr Piotrowski], *Widok: Theories and Practices of Visual Culture* 3 (2013), https://www.pismowidok.org/pl/archiwum/2013/3-archiwa-stanow-wyjatkowych/milosc-do-emancypacji (accessed July 11, 2025). ↩
21. Esanu, *The Postsocialist Contemporary*, 4. ↩
22. These reflections correspond with recent demands put forward by Magdalena Radomska, “How to Follow Marx with Class?,” 388. ↩

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ISSN 2956-4158