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Signal Strength Excellent in West Germany: Radio Tirana, European Maoist Internationalism, and its Disintegration in the Global Seventies

Claudia and Fred wanted to go to Albania. In 1972, the relatively small West German Maoist party they worked for recommended them for a two-year service stint at the Albanian international broadcaster, Radio Tirana. Katharina, an organizer for the party, assured Albanian officials that Fred had proven to be a trustworthy comrade and loyal fighter for the revolution. To be sure, Fred's class background was petty bourgeois, and he was currently studying medicine–but he was aware of his petty bourgeois ideas and fought diligently against them. His weakness remained a certain 'tendency toward intellectualism' which hampered his connection to 'the masses'. Nonetheless, Katharina was confident that a stay in the People's Republic of Albania would rectify his faults.[1]

Claudia had tougher obstacles to overcome. Unlike Fred, who held a leadership position in the Bavarian branch of the party, she had not yet been granted party membership, working instead in its youth organization. Like Fred, her class background was petty bourgeois. The

effects of her class background on her attitudes, however, had been amplified by the negative influence on her of her parents (who worked for the state) and her colleagues (she was a teacher).[2] Indeed, Fred's relationship with Claudia brought home the reality of class society: a farmer's son was just not good enough for his mother-in-law.[3] It was thus unsurprising that there had been a time when Claudia had not understood that the only future was revolution or that she could not remain attached to the idea of a career for herself. Fortunately, the party had largely been able to fix these attitudes. Claudia would surely also benefit from her work in Albania and from the influence of the ruling Party of Labour.[4] In her attached resumé, she professed to have since abandoned her positive attitude to having a career.[5]

Fred and Claudia were members of the Communist Party of Germany/Marxists-Leninists (*Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands/Marxisten-Leninisten* KPD/ML), a party whose significance far outweighed its membership numbers – in part, because, the KPD/ML maintained a close relationship to the Albanian ruling party, the Albanian Party of Labour (*Partia e Punës e Shqipërisë,* PPSh), from the outset.[6] Although only a minority of European Maoist parties sided with Albania after the Sino-Albanian Split in the mid-to-late seventies, Albania had long played an outsized role in European Maoism.[7] The importance of Albania was no West German peculiarity: the Belgian Maoist Jacques Grippa visited Albania at least three times in the 1960s before falling out with Albania, China, and his own party.[8] In Poland, the Albanian embassy facilitated contacts between Maoists and the Chinese as the Chinese embassy was under constant surveillance.[9] Indeed, the role of organizing pro-Chinese communists in Europe seems to have fallen disproportionately on the Albanians.[10]

The nascent literature on Global Maoism has shown that Maoism was an extremely diverse phenomenon that brought together many different movements from all over the world.[11]

The ideological appeal of Maoism to these different groups varied wildly. Between the wars in Algeria and Vietnam and the Soviet Union's de-escalation in the Cuban missile crisis, what continued to unite Maoists of different persuasions was a sense that while the Soviet Union had abandoned anti-imperialism in favour of 'peaceful coexistence', China remained on the side of the colonized.[12] To some, the major appeal was Mao's often pithy endorsements of revolutionary violence.[13] In many places, Mao's insistence on investigating conditions on the ground inspired students to enter factory work or engage in agricultural labour.[14] Within these different frames, Maoism also had enough room to allow for a whole range of ideological platforms, from non-hierarchical or anti-authoritarian Maoism to strict organization in cadre parties, from proletarian internationalism to revolutionary nationalism. To make sense of these often contradictory positions, some scholars have described Maoism as a community or language co-produced by the Chinese state and activists around the world.[15] Within this frame, far more attention has been paid to the creative appropriations of 1960s Maoist imagery and symbolism, than to the rigid cadre organizations that followed.[16] This is unfortunate, not only because in some countries these organizations became influential successors of the 1960s student movements but also, as I argue here, because of the role they played in the Sino-Albanian Cold War. By using the archives of West Germany's biggest Maoist party, the Communist League of West Germany (*Kommunistischer Bund Westdeutschlands*, KBW), this article not only illustrates this phenomenon in West Germany, but also elucidates the competition over influence within the Society of the Friends of Albania (*Gesellschaft der Freunde Albaniens*, GFA) in the early 1970s.[17] Although after 1978, the KBW was staunchly pro-China, in the early 1970s they sought the connection to Albania. The interest of the East German state in West German Maoism[18] and

the sheer size of the phenomenon in West Germany, and its extensive connections to Maoists in Europe and beyond make it both a particularly useful example and an emblematic one.

To speak of the 'global' dimensions of 1960s and 1970s protest movements has become somewhat commonplace.[19] 'Global', in this context, does not mean boundless. Even in the domain of extra-parliamentary politics, the world was not flat. Maoism was a 'global community' to which people from different countries had uneven access. Beyond the acting subjects of the movement, certain countries and movements became objects of identification and solidarity, while others became pariahs. To gain a better understanding of the different kinds of transnationalism operative in the 1970s, this article distinguishes between three analytical spaces in which the geographies of transnationalism look rather different from each other. In the spirit of this special issue, imagine these spaces of transnationalism as three semi-translucent maps stacked on top of each other, marking which aspects of transnational activism overlapped and which did not: the first map demarcates spaces of solidarity and belonging, namely the forms of transnational solidarity operative among Maoists in the 1970s. China and Albania, whose foreign policy preferences largely dictated solidarity with the Global South and precluded identification with the states of the Warsaw Pact, sit at the centre of this map. The second map delineates the spaces of the circulation of knowledge and ideas, bringing together those places in which Maoism as an ideology circulated, but also those in which Maoist 'knowledge' was produced. Here, Radio Tirana played a key role both in the production and dissemination of knowledge. These spaces of knowledge circulation cut across the Iron Curtain and included the Warsaw Pact states, in which Radio Tirana was both received and where it sought to amplify the voices of dissidents. Finally, the third map reflects those spaces of interaction and experience wherein concrete personal encounters among participants in the international community of Maoism

occurred.[20] These spaces include the housing village for foreigners working at Radio Tirana, the various locations visited by international travel groups, and the Chinese and Albanian embassies where social encounters took place, as well as the political campaigns Maoists engaged in.[21] A select few brokers mediated between these spaces, but this too, was highly uneven.[22]

This is also a story about radio. Although Albania's significance for European Maoism extends beyond an international radio station in the Albanian capital, Radio Tirana is nonetheless of central importance. Radio has long held the attention of Cold War historians. With scholars dividing the world into a West characterized by freedom of movement and freedom of the press, and an East characterized by closed borders and censorship, it is unsurprising that a disproportionate amount of attention has been paid to Western radio as an aspect of American soft diplomacy. Less has been written on broadcasting from the other side of the Iron Curtain, and virtually nothing has been written in English on Albania's international broadcasting to all continents, sometimes in over twenty languages.[23] Conversely, some scholars have focused on the role of radio in processes of decolonization and postcolonial national consolidation. Marissa Moorman, for example, has argued that, in Angola, radio was crucial in creating a community around 'invented traditions'.[24] As I argue here, Radio Tirana was a vital mediator for a global Maoism that functioned as a community centred on issues of revolutionary nationalism, proletarian internationalism, decolonization, and the global Cold War with all the tensions and contradictions that entailed.

In short, Maoism as a global community of protest was produced and consumed by a wide variety of actors across the world and across these three spaces, predicated and conditioned by developments in the global Cold War. As I demonstrate below, although concrete opportunities for direct encounters and knowledge production expanded throughout the 1970s,

Chinese and Albanian foreign policy increasingly fractured spaces of solidarity and belonging. Ultimately, for many, Maoism had lost its capacity to accommodate the wide variety of contradictory political positions and causes that had made it attractive in the first place.[25]

The Sino-Soviet Split and the Double Pivot of the Maoist (Broadcasting) International

In July 1968, a Radio Tirana listener from Amstelveen in the Netherlands had finally decided to write to the station whose German-language broadcasts he had been following for a while. The writer, who identified himself as hailing from a working-class family, was interested in Albanian magazines. Information about Albania had been hard to come by, which is why he had been delighted when Dutch television broadcast a forty-minute program about the accomplishments of the Albanian people. 'Our family was happy about the broadcast. Finally, something from the country that lives so close to the Chinese Republic'.[26] How could Albania—only about 2,000 kilometres from Amstelveen—seem closer in some ways to China than to Western Europe?

The answer lies in Albania's manoeuvring during the Sino-Soviet Split.[27] Beginning in the early 1960s, China and Albania increasingly aligned ideologically around a single issue: opposition to Soviet 'revisionism'. Outwardly, both Mao and Enver Hoxha rejected the Soviet course of de-Stalinization that followed in the wake of Khrushchev's speech 'On the Cult of Personality and its Consequences' at the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in February 1956 and the new Soviet policy of 'peaceful coexistence' with the West.[28] To understand this position from the Albanian perspective requires a detour to the immediate postwar period. Stalin's interventions had not only put an end to discussions about Albania becoming a Yugoslav Republic but had also increased Albania's symbolic importance in the world of international communism as a small socialist country defending its sovereignty against outside aggression and annexation.[29] Hoxha feared that a revision of Stalin's legacy

would entail a parallel rehabilitation of Yugoslavia's Tito, reviving fears of a Yugoslav annexation of Albania. Remarkably, this line of thought led to a steadfast defence of Stalin and his legacy and a rejection of de-Stalinization, which coincided with Mao's claims that denunciation of Stalin had gone too far. Enver Hoxha had managed to render the defence of Stalin coterminous with the defence of Albania's independence from Yugoslav imperialism.[30]

To say that Albania became a bridgehead for Chinese ambitions in Europe is not to say that Albania embraced all aspects of Maoism. Despite their joint rejection of de-Stalinization and the Soviet doctrine of 'peaceful coexistence', Elez Biberaj has argued that part of what attracted Albania to China was the relative freedom from interference that came with great physical distance.[31] Indeed, Hoxha was deeply suspicious of some of Mao's greatest undertakings, most notably the Cultural Revolution–which would subsequently excite so many of Mao's followers in the West. Behind closed doors, Albanian officials were highly critical of the Cultural Revolution: first, they worried that if China admitted the continued existence of the bourgeoisie, similar claims could be made about Albania; second, they worried that Mao sought to replace Stalin as the most important Marxist-Leninist; third, they worried that revisionism in China might lead to a rehabilitation of Yugoslavia.[32] Nonetheless, as China became increasingly isolated internationally, Tirana remained a steadfast ally.[33] As Elidor Mëhilli put it: 'the Albanian and Chinese domestic realities were worlds apart in 1967, but the two militant parties—masters of conspiratorial thinking and ruthless in its execution—found their rhetoric aligned'.[34]

For European Maoists, this outward unity and the role Albania would come to play in international anti-revisionist propaganda meant that China and Albania became a sort of double pivot in the global community of Maoism. Although some Maoists did indeed go to China and

live there, Albania was much easier to reach and, in some ways, became a proxy for Beijing in Europe.[35] When the KPD/ML was founded in 1968 with the participation of a pro-Chinese faction in the old West German Communist Party, the most important connections were to Albania, not China. European activists who travelled to Albania admired Albania's double opposition to the United States and the Soviet Union. Early travellers from West Germany and the United Kingdom went on joint trips to Albania's museums and praised the Museum Lenin-Stalin.[36] A member of a small group committed to revolution in Germany 'true to the teachings of Mao Zedong', and later founding member of the KPD/ML, wrote in 1967 that he and his comrades were attentive listeners of Radio Tirana, but they lacked a sufficient number of copies of Albanian writings. All copies they did have had come from Austria and the UK.[37] After traveling to Albania later that year, he published a report admiring a powerplant being built with Chinese support.[38] In these early years, Albania doubled as a space of interaction for (then very few) European activists and as an island of pro-Chinese communism in Europe. What shines through the letters and reports from Albania is that it was never just about Europe and Albania, but also about the desire for a space of belonging that tied together European activists, the Albanian state, and China.

With China's help, Albania expanded its international broadcasting capabilities. The country had long constructed an image of itself as a small, independent, communist country that had liberated itself from Nazi occupation and remained defiant of Moscow. Surrounded by supposed enemies (Yugoslavia to the East and the North, Greece to the South, and Italy to the West across the Adriatic Sea), Radio Tirana was meant to project an image of Albania as an exemplar of anti-colonial resilience. In 1978, Radio Tirana broadcast about 500 hours of programming per week in eighteen languages.[39] The station's archives are full of letters

confirming reception across Europe, the Americas, Africa, and Asia.[40] The scope of the station's

reporting was similarly transnational: programming included the reading of programmatic

statements by foreign parties as well as coverage of events in the parties' home countries, drawn

largely from the publications produced in the individual countries. Transcripts of radio

programming in 1971, as an example, include broadcasts covering Britain, Spain, Portugal,

Sweden and West Germany alongside New Zealand, Indonesia, Thailand, Brazil, and Sudan.[41]

By the 1970s, a select few foreign activists worked as presenters and translators for Radio

Tirana, some of whom appear to also have been involved in selecting content for the

international broadcasts. A document from the archive of the Party of Labour lists the names of

foreigners from Brazil, Peru, Spain, France, West Germany, New Zealand and Australia

alongside their tasks for the station, other jobs in Albania, and their salaries. All of them served

as speakers on the radio; some of them taught their respective language; most made corrections

to broadcast materials, and some worked as editors for foreign-language versions of Albanian

magazines. Most importantly, though, the document suggests that some foreign employees were

also presenting articles from the publications of international Marxist-Leninist parties.[42] Letters

from listeners confirm this: Ingvar from Sweden, for example, wrote with gratitude about the

broadcasts discussing a communist party in Ecuador and an article about 'socialism in Australia'

based on quotations from *Vanguard*, a Marxist-Leninist newspaper.[43] That this process of

knowledge production was not a democratic one is clear. Not only did a few editors at the radio

station decide on what was worth reproducing (both in terms of letters from listeners and stories

from the Maoist press), but it would appear that the language of Maoist knowledge was heavily

circumscribed. Indeed, framing broadcasts in repetitive, short, easy-to-remember phrases was a

key part of Radio Tirana's strategy.[44] Yet, if the station was at the centre of a global space of

knowledge circulation, its foreign broadcasts amplified local Maoist knowledge production and—at least in theory—provided often small Maoist parties with a global audience.

The spaces of knowledge circulation created by the broadcasts of Radio Tirana subsequently expanded throughout the 1970s and increasingly reached a truly global audience. Of course, listening to Radio Tirana did not imply support either for Albanian socialism or Mao's challenge to the Soviet Union. Indeed, it did not necessarily mean supporting socialism at all. Some would write in to complain about the station's criticism of the Soviet Union. One critic from Glasgow was incensed in 1968 about Radio Tirana's favourable coverage of the Prague Spring. 'Lenin … would spit on you', he wrote and 'no more literature, please'.[45] Even more importantly, many of the writers were entirely disinterested in Albanian socialism or viewed it as a curiosity. The act of listening to the radio was sometimes as important as the content of the broadcasts. In the Albanian countryside, for example, being observed while listening to the radio was itself a marker of status as many Albanians saw the radio as an emblem of modernization. Whether they were enthusiastic about the content of the broadcasts is an open, and individual, question.[46] There is also some evidence that, at least earlier on, the Albanian state was itself quite content with cultivating an international audience since an international radio audience suggested to the domestic population that Albania enjoyed widespread support abroad.[47]

On the listener side, there was an international subculture of radio enthusiasts, who listened to foreign radio because the ability to do so was in and of itself exciting. Listeners often confirmed reception of specific broadcasts via letter to the station, and stations would respond by sending so-called QSL cards with particular designs emblematic of the station or the country they were operating in.[48] For the stations themselves, these reports were invaluable because they served as feedback on the clarity of signal reception abroad.[49] Dieter from East Germany's letter

is a fairly typical example: He explained on which frequencies reception was clear and which frequencies worked less well, before requesting a QSL card. He also provided a short report on the broadcast he had received: first, there were news from Vietnam, Palestine, Laos; then, there was a song and some political commentary about Yugoslavia.[50] Sometimes, the letters simply asked questions about Albania, about which the writer knew little – such as one letter from Algeria inquiring about Albania's major industries and their role in the Second World War.[51] Sometimes, this type of letter complimented Albanian socialism; other times, it did not. Many writers asked for some kind of reward. A 15-year-old claimed to listen to Radio Tirana because of their coverage of Marxism-Leninism and 'Third World' liberation movements, before asking the station to send him an everyday Albanian matchbox for his collection.[52] None of this means that listeners were *necessarily* insincere in their sympathies, but it is certainly possible that the reward system played a part in motivating their letters and the way they phrased them.

Conversely, there were also plenty of sympathetic writers who participated in establishing Radio Tirana as a hub of Maoist knowledge circulation. A letter from Algeria praised Albania's 'support for the Arab nation' and proclaimed a strong bond between the Albanian and Arab peoples.[53] A writer from West Germany professed to listening to Radio Tirana broadcasts every day, before he complained about the increasing repression against 'friends of Albania' in the Federal Republic. He was nonetheless confident that the West German 'reactionaries' were bound to fail.[54] Someone at the station had subsequently written 'appropriate for listeners' mail broadcast' in pencil on the envelope.[55] Considering the proximity of Radio Tirana to the KPD/ML and the proximity of the KPD/ML to the Society of the Friends of Albania, it is not unreasonable to assume that West German Maoists in Albania amplified their own voices through these letters. Conveniently, this worked in the other direction as well. A

group closely associated with the KPD/ML in Kiel published and circulated brochures with transcripts of Radio Tirana's international coverage.[56] Similar publications appeared in Norway.[57] In any case, it appears that the broadcasts functioned, in part, to reinforce already existing political convictions, with Radio Tirana acting as a global echo chamber for both producers and consumers of the broadcasts.

Party Leaders, Radio People, and Revolutionary Tourists: Brokers of Transnationalism?

Even so, the transnationalism of Radio Tirana's international radio broadcasts remained abstract. Despite the letters and international medley of newspapers from which broadcasts were assembled, radio was and is a (mostly) one-way medium. Still, Radio Tirana–and Albania– served as a hub for global Maoism in yet another way: for a select few, Albania opened up a space of interaction. Granted, most Maoists did not work in Albania, and–as historians have pointed out for China as well–interaction between 'revolutionary tourists' and the population was usually extremely limited.[58] Nonetheless, in April 1969, editors from the Albanian paper *Rruga e Partisë* wrote to the editorial board of *Roter Morgen* and asked for ten copies of every issue of the KPD/ML's paper.[59] In addition, they inquired whether a delegation from the paper would travel to Albania. Apart from getting to know the country, the West Germans were invited to an exchange of views with the Albanian publishers.[60] In subsequent years the leadership of the West German party met regularly with Behar Shtylla, assistant secretary to the central committee of the Party of Labour. The meetings were attended by the KPD/ML's chairman and a founding member who had first travelled to Albania in 1967.[61] In 1974, the chairman of the KPD/ML first met with 'Comrade Hoxha' himself for a consultation.[62] Moreover, for the foreigners at the radio, life in Albania sometimes meant close quarters with peers from other countries. A former

member of the KPD/ML, who spent several years working in Tirana, recounted that in addition to Albanian, he also picked up French because he shared an apartment with French co-workers.[63] Tirana also facilitated connections across the Iron Curtain: in February 1966, the Polish pro-Chinese dissident Kazimierz Mijal fled Warsaw to East Berlin, where an Albanian contact facilitated his escape via West Berlin and Paris to Tirana. Despite holding a job at a Sino-Albanian shipping company that allowed for travel to China, he also worked in the radio station's Polish section.[64]

It is fair to assume that working in Tirana was a rare privilege. There was, however, another way in which European and international Maoists encountered each other through Albania: revolutionary tourism organized by the friendship societies, including the Society of the Friends of Albania (GFA), founded in 1971. Although the GFA had close ties to the KPD/ML, its various chapters were open to non-members of the party and ostensibly open to anybody interested in Albania regardless of political persuasion.[65] In reality, this was a contested issue within the various local sections of the GFA.[66] Apart from members of the KPD/ML, local chapters also included individuals without party affiliation and members of competing parties, including one founded in 1973: the Communist League of West Germany (KBW). Despite persistent rumours that the GFA was indistinguishable from the party, KBW members continued to insist that, although the KPD/ML had members inside the GFA, it did not control the organization.[67] This argument was voiced in a letter to the KBW's chairman, which proclaimed 'I think that the rumour that the GFA is a front organization of the KPD/ML is false, first because of the GFA's correct practice, and second, because there are several board members that are unorganized descendants of the student movement'.[68] Although that may have been wishful thinking, it does highlight that the society enabled the participation of a broader variety of actors.

Friendship travel was an integral part of the GFA's work. Although, according to one brochure, travellers had to organize their own transport to and from the airport in Vienna, where the trip began,[69] travel to Albania was far more accessible than helping in the production of the radio broadcasts. The GFA organized several preparatory events where prospective participants could learn about the country; while there, the purpose of the trips was to win over people for the friendship work; afterwards, travellers might tell their friends and family about Albania or even join the GFA. Doubtlessly, the Maoists that worked in the GFA were hoping to recruit from those new members. This turned out to be a suggestion of the Albanians, who sought the formation of neutral friendship societies across Europe (some already existed in France, Sweden, Austria, and Italy), so that national Maoist parties—Albania strongly suggested the creation of one united party—could recruit within them.[70] Whether that strategy was successful is another question. In any case, despite the GFA's official neutrality, it appears that upon arrival in Albania, hierarchies were quickly made clear. In fact, the claim that the GFA was politically neutral made things worse for unorganized members and travellers, since they were completely blindsided by the harsh fighting between different Maoist factions.[71]

In one case, the drama turned public. The travel group had already split into two: members of the KPD/ML on the one side, everybody else on the other. When, towards the end of the trip, a member of the KPD/ML accused a member of the latter group of being 'an enemy of Albania and a Trotskyist', the whole travel group was worried because tour groups from other countries might have overheard the conversation. To stop those other groups from thinking that the GFA tolerated 'enemies of Albania,' the travellers wrote a public statement and posted it in the hotel lobby.[72] Leaving aside the sectarian undertones, this incident reveals how a hotel in Albania became a space in which tour groups carefully selected to visit Albania encountered one

another. Of course, even if greater numbers travelled to Albania than were able to work for the radio station—no kind of work-stay was allowed for travellers—individuals engaging in concrete interactions with Albanians and groups from other countries would still have been in the minority.

These trips did afford a greater number of individuals and organizations that understood themselves as Maoists, short of being correspondents at Radio Tirana, the opportunity to become another kind of broker of transnational connections and knowledge circulation by writing travel reports for their party's newspapers. Here too, the travel reports contributed to the establishment of a kind of echo chamber. More often than not, authoring travel reports seems to have been done in the service of a certain kind of status rather than a genuine attempt to translate knowledge acquired in Albania to local party members at home. Again and again, the KBW's travellers to Albania submitted manuscripts for publication in the party's *Kommunistische Volkszeitung* or promised articles that remained unfinished. Often, editors would take a long time to reply. In one case, an editor apologetically wrote to Ilse, a teacher who had sent in an article about Albania after a trip: 'we have to say that few of these reports convey a lively impression. Often, you can hardly tell that the comrades were there and asked questions'.[73] Another report explained how travellers had learned in Albania that long hair for men was a sign of bourgeois individualism. The KBW's editor's reply was sharp. To simply transfer the Albanian prohibition on long hair to a Western European context was simply not good enough: 'the article is an example of uncritical enthusiasm which explains nothing and consequently convinces nobody'.[74] The KBW's origins in the student movement of the 1960s go some way to explain this reaction: long hair had been a key part of the cultural politics of the student movement.[75] Travel to Albania and contact to officials—be it party officials or travel guides and translators—promised

access not only to the spaces of interaction but to the knowledge-producing elite of the party. But as the cases of the 'failed' travel literature reveal, the writing may frequently have been primarily for the gratification of the writers themselves, while the 'knowledge' ended up in the waste baskets of disappointed editors.

Beyond the frustrations of various editors, the flow of information was also problematic in the other direction. Some listeners complained to Radio Tirana that Albania was too narrowly allied with the KPD/ML and that the broadcaster's coverage of German politics was too narrowly determined by the party's perspective. The closeness of this relationship was revealed by the experiences of one listener, who had previously written to Radio Tirana to submit a reception report and request a QSL card. To his apparent dismay, revealed in a second letter to the station, instead of a QSL card, a woman from the KPD/ML had come to his home to discuss politics.[76] Another writer complained that the reports about the Marxist-Leninist movement in West Germany invariably equated Marxism-Leninism with the KPD/ML. The writer went on to list a number of competing groups that he himself preferred.[77]

In some cases, the transnationalism of the brokers sitting at the hub in Tirana obscured other, more local, forms of transnationalism, while simultaneously revealing how, from the late 1960s to the mid-to-late 1970s, Albania remained at the heart of transnational Maoism's spaces of belonging. After all, for most Maoists in Europe, China remained impossibly far away. One writer, for example, complained that the coverage of events in the Federal Republic contained blatant errors. In their coverage of a demonstration in Dortmund in the Autumn of 1972, the radio had allegedly claimed that 20,000 people had 'marched under the leadership of the KPD/ML'.[78] According to the letter, it was actually a competing West German party of the author's sympathies that had dominated the protests. Ironically, it was neither. The

demonstration in Dortmund against the 'reactionary foreigner law' had been organized by a nation-wide campaign under the leadership of Iranian students supported by a wide variety of groups.[79] A tension thus also existed between the concrete realities of the campaigns European Maoists were involved in, the majority of which happened at home, and the transnationalism opened up by Maoism's spaces of belonging and knowledge circulation. Here, the West German brokers of transnationalism obscured the multi-national leadership of campaigns at home. These episodes reveal the tensions *within* the spaces of belonging of transnational Maoism, which included many Iranian activists in the Federal Republic at the time.

From Three Worlds Theory to Hoxha's Critique: The Fracturing of Global Maoism's Spaces of Transnationalism

In March 1978, a letter arrived at Radio Tirana from someone at the Women Teachers' College for Sugu, Ganye, and Yola, in what was then Gongola State, Nigeria. The author claimed to regularly listen to Radio Tirana alongside Radio Beijing and praised Radio Tirana's news programs, reportedly enjoying the Marxist-Leninist tone of the broadcasts. The letter's author had listened to a program about the Marxist-Leninist Party of Iran, which suggested that the party was 'organizing the persistent struggle against the Shah and other exploiters'.[80] At the same time, the author had gained the impression, from listening to Radio Beijing, that the Chinese no longer cared about the global communist movement. The author had never learned about revolutionary parties in Iran or Japan, and the Chinese coverage of Iran seemed to mostly focus on the Shah, 'one of their allies in the Third World'.[81] The letter closed on a note of gratitude for Albania's support of revolutionary movements everywhere. Similarly, Charles from Lausanne, Switzerland, complained of anti-Albanian attacks in Maoist publications.[82] Clearly, the Sino-Albanian relationship was changing by the late 1970s, but what did that mean for

transnational Maoism?

What had happened was that the double pivot at the centre of global Maoism had been blown to pieces by the global Cold War. Maoism's spaces of belonging began to shrink. In 1974, Deng Xiaoping, then First Vice-Premier of China, laid out the Three Worlds Theory, a doctrine that would thereafter govern China's foreign policy and that seemingly justified not only China's support for Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship in Chile, but also the regimes in Greece and Spain. Against a 'First World' of superpowers—the United States and the Soviet Union—stood the 'Third World' of 'developing countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America'. All other countries belonged to the 'Second World' whose support was needed in the fight against the superpowers.[83]

In some ways, the Three Worlds Theory provided an ideological justification for the brewing tensions between Maoism as a global ideology and China's foreign policy, among them the escalation into open conflict of nationalist hostilities between Vietnam, Cambodia, and China, China's rapprochement with the United States after Nixon's visit, and China's support for autocrats in the Global South and authoritarian regimes in Europe. These realignments stood in direct contradiction to global Maoism's emergence over the course of the 1960s in the context of widespread protests against the American War in Vietnam, when Mao and American propaganda efforts were in full agreement that Vietnam was key for the spread of communism in Asia. Given Mao's insistence that liberation in the 'Third World' was the precondition for revolution in the metropoles and the (if uneasy) cooperation between China, Cambodia and Vietnam during the Vietnam War, Indochina appeared as a key force for world revolution, which was now being undermined by tensions between the three states. But in truth, these alignments had always been fraught, and in the second half of the 1970s they escalated into open conflict.[84]

Richard Nixon visited China in 1972. In 1974, the conservative Bavarian politician Franz Josef Strauß followed suit, causing great consternation within the ranks of West German Maoists. The chairman of the KPD/ML fully embraced the Chinese position that—faced with the threat of Soviet military might—the European working classes should work with patriots and nationalists to defend their homelands.[85] The KBW differed: Under no circumstances should the West German working class lose track of the dangers of West German imperialism.[86] That being said, at this juncture, these conflicts were a question of different priorities *within* Maoism. The KPD/ML—the closest aligned with the Albanian party—turned out to be one of the most steadfast defenders of Chinese foreign policy.

The KBW also struggled with the Chinese decision to support Pinochet in Chile. When, in 1973, left-wing president Salvador Allende was deposed and replaced by military general Augusto Pinochet in a coup d'état, China responded by recognizing Pinochet and expelling Allende's diplomats. In large part due to the fair amount of overlap between Maoist organizations and West German Chile solidarity groups in the 1970s, the Chinese line proved hard to convey to the party base in West Germany. Several local party groups wrote to the leadership complaining that there was confusion among the membership about support for Pinochet and wondering if Chinese support did not weaken the struggle against the junta.[87] On the urging of the KBW's leadership, one of their members working as a translator in Beijing sent back a transcript from a conversation with a Chinese official explaining the Chinese position.[88] Whether this resolved the concerns within the base is unclear, but for a good part of the 1970s, Maoism could accommodate those conflicts precisely *because* of the contradiction at the core of Maoism's ideological language between proletarian internationalism and a full embrace of 'revolutionary' nationalism in the 'Third World'.[89] It was precisely this contradiction at the heart

of Maoism that rendered it flexible enough to accommodate such a wide variety of revolutionary projects across the North/South divide.[90]

In some ways, these developments empowered the brokers of transnationalism: not only were they needed by the party, but their location abroad authorized and legitimized their responses. The experiences, in the 1930s, of a communist from the American South might prove instructive here: in his autobiography, Junius Scales described the moment when, despite his utter bafflement and a complete absence of comprehensible reasons, the order of the day was to make sense of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact in discussions at local meetings. In the heat of the moment, he repeated a justification a friend had given a few days before. Later, he remembered never having stopped to think through the issue but feeling proud of having convinced the majority of meeting attendees.[91] Taking seriously this empowering dimension of 'explaining' apparent ideological contradictions, Scale's anecdote can shed some light on why the brokers of transnationalism of West German Maoism were so willing to defend positions that appeared to be in contradiction to their own commitments.

Although the Pinochet dilemma and the growing tensions between China, Vietnam, and Cambodia had already complicated the path of global Maoism, the real break came with Albania's public criticism of the Three Worlds Theory and the subsequent falling out between Albania and post-Mao China. At the Seventh Congress of the Party of Labor, Hoxha prematurely praised the defeat of Deng Xiaoping.[92] He reiterated his commitment to friendship with China but strongly condemned NATO and US imperialism.[93] The congress was attended by a delegation from the KPD/ML, alongside delegations from North Korea, Vietnam, Laos, Brazil, Britain, France, Spain, Colombia, and Indonesia, among others.[94] After the congress, eight Latin American parties endorsed Hoxha's criticism and condemned the Three Worlds Theory.

However, other allied splinter parties—among them the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist)–took the Chinese side.[95] Then, in July 1977, Albania came out in full force against the Three Worlds Theory, accusing the new Chinese policy of abandoning class struggle in favor of geopolitics, betraying working-class struggle against the bourgeoisie in Western Europe, and failing to distinguish between socialist and reactionary regimes in the 'Third World'. A German translation promptly appeared in *Roter Morgen*.[96] Maoism's spaces of belonging had shattered: The alliance of China and Albania at the centre of these spaces had transformed into the question of *either* China *or* Albania.

For Maoist activists in West Germany, the falling out meant further fracturing–a fact not lost on the East German Ministry for State Security (the Stasi). Their, admittedly often confused, 240-page report on Maoist and Trotskyist organizations in West Germany seemed rather gleeful about Maoism's recent ideological difficulties. The report noted that over the course of the 1970s, Maoist parties had secured support from China and Albania with varying success. But only the KPD/ML managed to develop a strong connection to Albania, with the party's chairman travelling to Tirana repeatedly and attending the congress of the Party of Labour.[97] Beginning with the difficult questions thrown up by Strauß's visit to China, the Stasi thought it could detect growing rifts between Maoists.[98] And this was not just in the case of the KPD/ML, but also in the case of other Maoist organizations in West Germany. The report attested that a party's concrete political positions after 1977 were largely determined by the positions of the states that they had received the most recognition from. The KPD/ML remained bound to Albania, the KBW and others held up China's Three Worlds Theory, with yet others rethinking their allegiance to either state.[99] Ironically, the positions that Maoist parties had to work out on their own before the Sino-Albanian Split were now reversed: the KBW fully embraced the Three Worlds Theory, while the

KPD/ML rejected it outright. By 1978, the party removed Mao's portrait from the masthead of *Roter Morgen*.[100]

For foreign activists inside and adjacent to the West German Maoist milieu, the spaces of belonging shrank as well. In January 1978, the KBW addressed a meeting of Iranian students. To their dismay, they were booed whenever they made references to the Three Worlds Theory, which was unpopular with some Iranian activists since it implied that their adversary–the Shah– was a revolutionary force against the superpowers. Even worse—to the minds of the KBW's attendees—the pro-Albanian KPD/ML earned the most applause. In March 1978, the Confederation of Iranian Students (National Union) held an international congress in Frankfurt am Main. Again, the KBW was invited, but this time to a special session for 'foreign sympathizers'.[101] Before they had a chance to read their solidarity address, however, the KBW's delegates were asked to remove all references to the Three Worlds Theory. The KBW refused and left the congress.[102] To be sure, new transnational connections were being made, and different parties continued to work across different borders. But at least in moments like this, it appeared that Maoism had lost its capacity to accommodate the major struggles of the day.

At the same time, Radio Tirana's international broadcasting continued to expand. By 1983, the broadcaster had expanded to 563 hours of programming in 21 languages weekly.[103] The collaboration of the KPD/ML also continued: If the listener from Gongola State in Nigeria was still tuning in in 1983, they might have learned—in addition to news from Marxist-Leninist publications from Colombia, Brazil, India, Benin, Togo and elsewhere—about a series of strikes in major West German shipyards. Broadcasting plans for that year featured a few stories about such unrest, each culled from the KPD/ML's *Roter Morgen*, which lauded the rather short-lived

strikes as 'a major step for the West German working class' and amplified the impression of a working-class revolutionary movement in West Germany.[104]

There is a certain irony here. In the early decades of Albania's international radio programming, Radio Tirana's international broadcasting could project the image of a modern socialist state despite the fact that, domestically, the opportunities for partaking in radio culture were limited at best.[105] As West German Maoist parties began to fade into the background of activist culture, the tide had turned, and the brokers of transnationalism seemed to be the only ones left supplying the parties with relevance. From the late 1960s to the mid-to-late 1970s, Albania played a key role in tying together a transnational space of belonging for European Maoists. But the forces that had made that possible—the shake-up of the world in the wake of decolonization and the political possibilities generated by the Sino-Soviet Split —also began to curtail those spaces by the second half of the 1970s.

Conclusion

Radio Tirana came to play a crucial role in the Maoist mobilizations of the global 1970s as an integral participant in the dissemination and production of Maoist knowledge. The geopolitics of the global Cold War meant that Albania was able to establish itself as China's outpost in Europe, but through its radio broadcasts, it was able to reach far beyond that. People from Brazil, Peru, Australia and New Zealand joined their European peers at the international radio station, and the reach of the signal extended to much of the world. From the perspective of the activists, though, much of the transnationalism happened at the level of a select few individuals that had the privilege of joining the revolutionary broadcasting project or had managed to get themselves into organized travel groups. At the same time, contributors to the publications of what often were very small parties could find their writing reproduced on air and be confident that it had now

been disseminated far beyond the reach of their newspapers. In that sense, the radio station facilitated a transnationalism of knowledge circulation that seemed virtually boundless.

If the spaces of knowledge circulation seemed limitless and largely unaffected by the Sino-Albanian Split in 1977-1978, the same was not true for the spaces of interaction of global Maoism. To be clear, Maoist parties continued to engage in transnational cooperation: the KBW increasingly shifted its efforts to Southern Africa; the KPD/ML continued its strong relationship with Albania; another party decided to focus on the opposition in Eastern Europe by the end of the 1970s, before dissolving soon thereafter. But after the breakup between China and Albania, it became increasingly hard to see these as engaged in a common project.

In the end, it was the spaces of belonging and solidarity that were most affected by the geopolitics of the Cold War. The Sino-Albanian partnership enabled the creation of a global community that unified many disparate causes across the world. Yet, with China's turn to an increasingly pragmatic foreign policy that sought allies among the authoritarian regimes of Iran, Greece, Spain, and Chile, many activists–whose Maoism had been unbreakably linked to the opposition to those regimes–found increasingly little common ground with China's 'leadership of the Third World'. What this story has revealed is that 'transnationalism' should stand at the beginning, not at the end of the analysis. Both the period of relative harmony between the spaces of transnationalism of global Maoism and the disintegration that followed were full of conflict, marked by struggles over the power that would allow one to become a broker of transnationalism, and could sometimes even obscure other forms of transnational cooperation.

Joining the other contributions in this special issue, this article has also made an argument about *how to do transnational history*. Paying attention to different kinds of transnationalism has revealed that transnationalism was always extremely uneven, and the

relationship between the spaces of transnationalism invariably complex. China and Albania did not determine politics on the ground. It is true that the official political positions of Maoist parties seem to—in part—have been determined by their success in gaining recognition from either Beijing or Tirana, a reality that became especially clear once the spaces of global Maoism began to fall apart. Nonetheless, it was local political campaigns–from fateful anti-colonial struggles to much more inconsequential campaigns in West Germany–that filled the rather formalistic language of Maoism with content. Furthermore, activists were involved in local campaigns such as mobilization in factories, works council elections, or party work in support of these campaigns long before they were brokers of transnationalism. It has been one of the arguments of this article that global Maoism as a space of belonging and solidarity was co-produced by activists around the world, and that international broadcasting and print distribution were central to this production. The disagreements over the representation of the Iran campaign reveal that the relationship between the different spaces of transnationalism was full of friction and that the concrete experiences of political activism did not always resonate with Maoism's transnational and global knowledge circulation.

It would be a mistake to present these frictions as evidence that, on the one hand, there was abstract transnationalism of belonging, solidarity, and the (imperfect) circulation of ideas and, on the other hand, a much less successful transnationalism of concrete political action. This concretistic understanding of politics would miss the point that, for global Maoism, the creation of a global revolutionary movement was in and of itself a necessity, inherent to a politics that understood itself as standing in opposition to global forces. When it comes to the work of the Freds and Claudias of the world at the international broadcaster in Tirana, *both* the spaces of belonging and solidarity *and* those of knowledge circulation were concrete and political.

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[1] Letter: A. Katharina [anonymized], Zentrale Organisationsabteilung der KPD/ML to the Albanian Party of Labour (no date), Arkivi Qendror Shtetëror (Central State Archives of the Republic of Albania, AQSh hereafter), Fondi (f.) 14/APMP, Marrëdhëniet me Partinë Komuniste të Gjermanisë M-L (KPD/ML hereafter), Viti (v.) 1972, Dosja (d.) 5, 2. Unless otherwise indicated, [anonymized] refers to anonymization by the author.

[2] Letter: A. Katharina [anonymized], Zentrale Organisationsabteilung der KPD/ML to the Albanian Party of Labour (no date).

[3] "Lebenslauf [Fred]," (1972), AQSh f. 14/APMP, KPD/ML, v. 1972, d. 5, 3.

[4] Letter: [Anonymized], Zentrale Organisationsabteilung der KPD/ML to the Albanian Party of Labour (no date).

[5] "Lebenslauf [Claudia]," (1972), AQSh f. 14/APMP, KPD/ML, v. 1972, d. 5, 5.

[6] The KPD/ML had about 300 members in 1973 and about 800 full party members in 1978. As a rule, estimates are notoriously difficult both because of the secretive nature of the party and because membership figures usually exclude members in the various affiliated mass organizations of the parties. For the above estimates, as well as estimates on the other major Maoist parties in West Germany, see Probst, "Die Kommunistischen Parteien der Bundesrepublik Deutschland." Probst lists 2,500 members for the KBW but acknowledges that this doesn't include the members of its factory cells, of which there were 160 in 1975; nor of its cells within the military; nor membership of any of its so-called mass-organizations. This problem extends beyond Germany. A. Belden Fields justifies his own disproportionate focus on the so-called anti-hierarchical Maoism of the French *Gauche Prolétarienne* with the difficulty of obtaining sources from the more conspiratorial and hierarchical parties. See Fields, *Trotskyism and Maoism,* 87. West German intelligence estimated that in 1975, there were about 10,000-15,000 active Maoists in Germany. See Brown, *West Germany and the Global Sixties*, 253-254. For the whole decade of the 1970s, one writer claims that up to 100,000 people may have gone through one of West Germany's Maoist parties or its many mass organizations. Koenen, *Das rote Jahrzehnt*, 18.

[7] For an encyclopaedic overview of Maoist parties in North America, Europe, Oceania, and Japan, see Alexander, *Maoism in the Developed World*. In almost every case, a minority sided with the Albanians after the Sino-Albanian Split. The role of the Albanians in these networks was also not lost on contemporary observers: In the 1970s, a former employee of the West German Ministry of Defence co-authored an incredibly detailed book on Western European Maoists as part of China's European strategy. Much of the first part of the book is dedicated to publishing and broadcasting operations in Beijing and Tirana and their distribution networks through embassies across Europe. See Schlomann and Friedlingstein, *Die Maoisten: Pekings Filialen in Westeuropa*.

[8] On the relationship between Grippa and the Albanian Party of Labor, see Marku, "Stories from the International Communist Movement." For an earlier account of Grippa's political trajectory, see Bourseiller, *Les Maoïstes*. 49-54.

[9] Gnoinska, "Promoting the 'China Way' of Communism in Poland and beyond during the Sino-Soviet Split," 349.

[10] In part, this may have been because of disagreements about what role China and Albania should play in organizing a Maoist international abroad. While China sought to support pro-Chinese splinter parties around the world, Albania pushed for the organization of a rival bloc to the Soviet bloc. See Biberaj, *Albania and China*, 63. However, there is also evidence (including the Albanian embassy's facilitation of connections to the Chinese state in Poland) that there was a certain division of labour with respect to the splinter parties. According to Ylber Marku, China provided Albania with

significant funds to support the activities of anti-Soviet communist parties in Europe. See Marku, "Stories from the International Communist Movement," 2.

[11] See Lovell, *Maoism;* Cook, *Mao's Little Red Book*. For Maoism in Argentina, see Mignon and Fishwick, "Origins and Evolution of Maoism in Argentina, 1968–1971." For Maoist activity in East Germany, see Slobodian, "Badge Books and Brand Books: The Mao Bible in East and West Germany"; Slobodian, "The Maoist Enemy"; Wunschik, *Die maoistische KPD/ML und die Zerschlagung ihrer "Sektion DDR" durch das MfS*. For France, see Bourseiller, *Les Maoïstes*; Fields, *Trotskyism and Maoism*.

[12] As Odd Arne Westad points out, 'Vietnamese resistance to the United States inspired not only Third World radicals but also — for the first time — made the Cold War in the Third World a central part of left-wing mobilization within the pan-European world itself'. See Westad, *The Global Cold War*, 192. Julia Lovell similarly argued that while Ho Chi Minh enjoyed the prestige of waging war against the United States, the Vietnamese guerrilla tactics were widely seen to have been pioneered by Mao. See Lovell, *Maoism*, 276. When China appeared to apply Mao's strategy of organizing the peasants in the countryside to 'encircle the cities' to the world-political stage—insisting that the United States and Europe were the world's cities, Maoism provided a framing whereby the anti-colonial struggles in the Global South could yield emancipatory *and* revolutionary potential for the Global North. See Jian, "China, the Third World, and the Cold War." On Sino-Soviet competition in the Global South, see Friedman, *Shadow Cold War*.

[13] This seems to have been the case for the Black Panther Party in the United States. See Kelley and Esch, "Black like Mao." Similarly, Sebastian Gehrig has argued for an understanding of West German terrorism as Maoist on this basis. See Gehrig, "Zwischen uns und dem Feind einen klaren Trennungsstrich ziehen." For an argument about the inspiration female members of the Baader-Meinhof group found in women's participation in the Algerian War, see Melzer, *Death in the Shape of a Young Girl*, particularly chapter 1.

[14] For the centrality of the 'investigation' or *enquête* to French Maoism, see Bourg, "The Red Guards of Paris." For factory interventions in West Germany, see Arps, *Frühschicht*. For a broader view tracing multiple sources for the practice of 'investigation' on the Left, see Hoffman, *Militant Acts*.

[15] See Frazier, *The East Is Black*. Robin Kelley and Betsy Esch have argued that the entire conflict over Black nationalism or internationalism can be understood as an intra-Maoist conflict. See Kelley and Esch, "Black like Mao."

[16] This is especially true in the French case, where the vast majority of the attention has been focused on the *Gauche Prolétarienne*, in large part because of the impact the GP milieux had on key intellectuals of the postwar period. On this topic, see Bourg, "The Red Guards of Paris"; Bourg,

"Principally Contradiction"; Bourg, *From Revolution to Ethics*; Robcis, "China in Our Heads"; Wolin, *The Wind from the East*. In the West German case, writing on the Maoist cadre organizations of the 1970s has largely been left to the, often regretful, narratives of former activists—a literature Quinn Slobodian has aptly termed 'mea culpa Maoism'. See Slobodian, "The Meanings of Western Maoism." For some examples, see Aly, *Unser Kampf*; Jasper, *Der gläserne Sarg*; Koenen, *Das rote Jahrzehnt*; Kräuter, *So ist die Revolution, mein Freund*.

[17] On the role of the friendship associations in creating European-Chinese networks, see Cordoba and Kaixuan, "Unconditional Followers of the PRC?"

[18] The East German Ministry for State Security had been observing the Albanian and Chinese embassies in East Berlin and their connections to West German activists since the 1960s. See, for example, "Anhang zur periodischen Berichterstattung für den Zeitraum vom 1.5.-30.6.1969 zu speziellen Problemen der politisch-operativen Arbeit der HA XX/2," Bundesarchiv (BArch hereafter), MfS, HA XX, Nr. 11054.

[19] Davis, "A Whole World Opening Up"; Klimke, *The Other Alliance*; Jian et al., *The Routledge Handbook of the Global Sixties*; Christiansen and Scarlett, *The Third World in the Global 1960s*; Brown, *West Germany and the Global Sixties*. For a transnational account of political violence in Europe, see Terhoeven, *Deutscher Herbst in Europa*. See also the first chapter of Melzer, *Death in the Shape of a Young Girl*.

[20] With respect to the literature on European Maoism and 'Third Worldism', it can be said that those accounts that have primarily understood those phenomena as the projection of the hopes and dreams of European radicals onto the Global South have disproportionately focussed on spaces of solidarity and belonging but neglected the other two. See most importantly Wolin, *The Wind from the East*. Similarly, at the other extreme, accounts that overemphasize personal encounters or 'spaces of interaction' have provided a necessary corrective but at the expense of the tremendous amount of friction produced between the three spaces described here. This includes Quinn Slobodian's important interventions in Slobodian, *Foreign Front*.

[21] Given the emphasis here on the different spatial dimensions of global Maoism as it was mediated through Albania, this article does not go into detail about the intellectual history of Maoism. There are now many accounts of the differences between the various German groups. Among others, see Kühn, *Stalins Enkel, Maos Söhne*; Benicke, *Von Adorno Zu Mao*; Benicke, *Die K-Gruppen*; Stengl, *Zur Geschichte der 'K-Gruppen'*; Steffen, *Geschichten Vom Trüffelschwein*. For a short overview of the different organizations in English, see Markovits and Gorski, *The German Left*, 59-65. For an account of how the West German Maoist cadre parties of the 1970s grew out of the 1960s student movement, see Brown, *West Germany and the Global Sixties*, 234-285.

22 For an argument about "transnational intermediaries" in West German activism, see Tompkins, "Grassroots Transnationalism(s)." The language of 'cultural brokerage' is more common to the study of empire and migration. Compare de Jong, "Brokerage and Transnationalism" and the introduction to Rodgers et al., *Cultures in Motion*. For an exception, see Bilecen and Faist, "International Doctoral Students as Knowledge Brokers".

23 The one notable exception to this is Mëhilli, "Radio and Revolution." Like this article, Mëhilli's contribution emphasizes Radio Tirana's role as a broadcaster that criss-crossed the Iron Curtain and disrupted the geographies of the Cold War. His focus is on the earlier years of the radio station and what it meant for Albania as an actor in the global Cold War. Examples of the extensive literature on Cold War broadcasting include Komska, "West Germany's Cold War Radio: A Crucible of the Transatlantic Century [Special Issue]"; Risso, "Radio Wars: Broadcasting during the Cold War [Special Issue]"; Roth-Ey, *Moscow Prime Time*; Johnson and Parta, *Cold War Broadcasting*; Badenoch, Fickers, and Henrich-Franke, *Airy Curtains in the European Ether*.

24 Moorman, "Airing the Politics of Nation."

25 This does not mean that Maoism disappeared. On the contrary, while it lost its appeal in large parts of the Global North by the 1980s, Maoism remained a political force in Peru and parts of Asia. See Lovell, *Maoism*.

26 Letter: [anonymized] to Radio Tirana (July 26, 1968).

27 The literature on the Sino-Soviet split is vast and continues to grow. For a selection, see Chen, *Mao's China and the Cold War*; Kuo, *Contending with Contradictions*; Li, "Ideological Dilemma"; Li, *Mao's China and the Sino-Soviet Split*; Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*; Radchenko, *Two Suns in the Heavens*; Roberts et al., "Forum: Mao, Khrushchev, and China's Split with the USSR"; Westad, *Brothers in Arms*; Zagoria, *The Sino-Soviet Conflict*. On Albania specifically, see Biberaj, *Albania and China*; Griffith, *Albania and the Sino-Soviet Rift*; Lalaj, Ostermann, and Gage, "Albania is not Cuba"; Marku, "Communist Relations in Crisis"; Mëhilli, "Defying De-Stalinization"; Mëhilli, *From Stalin to Mao*; Selivanov, "Moscow–Hanoi–Tirana Relations in the Context of the Split in the Socialist Camp."

28 Among Eastern Bloc officials, China's rejection of 'peaceful coexistence' at the time of the Cuban Missile crisis caused great anxiety because it attracted sympathy for the Chinese challenge to Moscow among African and Asian students in the socialist world. See for example Bodie, "Global GDR?"

29 Mëhilli, "Defying De-Stalinization," 37.

30 Mëhilli, "Defying De-Stalinization," 56.

31 Biberaj, *Albania and China*, 38-40.

[32] Marku, "China and Albania," 372-376. In the 1960s, Albania had its own Cultural Revolution. Despite similarities in ideological statements, it differed in significant respects from the Chinese campaign, and, more importantly, had begun years before the contours of the Chinese campaign would have become clear to the Albanians. See Mëhilli, *From Stalin to Mao*, 220; Marku, "China and Albania," 378. See also Pano, "The Albanian Cultural Revolution."

[33] Marku, "China and Albania," 382-383.

[34] Mëhilli, *From Stalin to Mao*, 220. Public praise and private criticism seemed to go hand in hand throughout the 1960s. See Mëhilli, "Mao and the Albanians," 173.

[35] West German Maoist parties sought relations with the Chinese Communist Party with varying levels of success. For a short while beginning in the mid-1970s, the Communist League of West Germany had a 'cell in Beijing', made up of a handful of West Germans who worked for China's foreign language press and the international radio station, or provided language instruction. For an autobiographical account, see Kräuter, *So ist die Revolution, mein Freund*.

[36] Letter: Erich [anonymized] to the Central Committee of the Albanian Party of Labour (August 1, 1964), AQSh, f. 14/APMP, KPD/ML, v. 1964, d. 1, 12.

[37] Letter: Günther [anonymized] to the Publisher Naim Fasheri (August 21st, 1967), AQSh, f. 14/APMP, KPD/ML, v. 1967, d. 1, 17. "Revisionisten - Rowdys - Renegaten." 1967. *Die Wahrheit*, No. 1, May

[38] "Eine Hand am Gewehr - Die andere am Spaten." 1967. *Die Wahrheit*, No. 8, December.

[39] The Board for International Broadcasting, "1978 Annual Report," 7.

[40] Letters received by the foreign broadcasting section of Radio Tirana until 1980 are preserved in their original form accompanied by an Albanian translation at the Central State Archive in Tirana. See AQSh, f. 509.

[41] "Die Marxistisch-Leninistische Weltbewegung wächst und erstarkt." 1971. *Ausgewählte Sendungen von Radio Tirana* November/December, 60-82.

[42] "Duties performed by foreign comrades of the Radio…" (August 20, 1973), AQSh, f. 14/STR, v. 1974, d. 562, 2-3.

[43] Letter: Ingvar [anonymized] to Radiodiffusion Television Albanaise (July 11, 1973), AQSh, f. 509, v. 1973, d. 14, 92-96.

[44] See Mëhilli, "Radio and Revolution," 77.

[45] Letter: [Anonymizedanonymized] to Radio Tirana (September 2, 1968), AQSh, f. 509, v. 1968, d. 16, 116.

[46] Pistrick, "Listening to 'the Human Without a Soul'", 142-143.

[47] Mëhilli, "Radio and Revolution," 75.

[48] QSL stands for "I confirm reception" in Q-Code, a code developed for early radio telecommunications.

[49] Berg, *Listening on the Short Waves*, 330-363.

[50] Letter: Dieter [anonymized] to Radio Tirana German Program (May 1968), AQSh, f. 509, v. 1968, d. 16, 10.

[51] Letter: [anonymized] to Service de Radio Tirana (April 5, 1972), AQSh, f. 509, v. 1972, d. 13, 12-13.

[52] Letter: Robin [anonymized] to Radio Tirana (November 7, 1973), AQSh, f. 509, v. 1973, d. 14, 133-134.

[53] Letter: [anonymized] to Monsieur le Directeur de la Radio et Television Albanaise (October 15, 1973), AQSh, f. 509, v. 1973, d. 14, 130-131.

[54] Letter: Gerd [anonymized] to Radio Tirana German Language Section (January 27, 1973), AQSh, f. 509, v. 1973, d. 14, 5.

[55] Letter: Gerd [anonymized] to Radio Tirana German Language Section (January 27, 1973), 6.

[56] The third issue of *Ausgewählte Sendungen von Radio Tirana* [Select broadcasts of Radio Tirana] contained a report on the sixth congress of the party of labor alongside stories from Angola, Brazil, West Germany, among others. See *Ausgewählte Sendungen von Radio Tirana* (January 15, 1972).

[57] Mëhilli, "Radio and Revolution," 84.

[58] See for example Wolin, *The Wind from the East*. For a fascinating account of the Soviet strategies to win over European intellectuals travelling to the Soviet Union, see Stern, *Western Intellectuals and the Soviet Union, 1920-40*.

[59] A few years later, the Albanian embassy in East Berlin would help distribute copies of *Roter Morgen* and support the establishment of the KPD/ML in East Germany. See "Betreff: Information über das Vertreiben der Zeitung KPD/ML durch die Botschaft der VRA," BArch, MfS, HA II, Nr. 35331, 37-39.

[60] Letter: Editorial Board *Rruga e Partisë* to the Editorial Board *Roter Morgen* (April 28, 1969), AQSh, f. 14/APMP, KPD/ML, v. 1969, d. 1, 5-6.

[61] Transcript: Conversation between Behar Shtylla, Assistant Secretary to the Central Committee of the PPSh and a Delegation of the KPD/ML, AQSh, f. 14/APMP, KPD/ML, v. 1970, d. 1, 1-22.

[62] Transcript: Conversation between Enver Hoxha, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Albanian Party of Labour and a Delegation of the Communist Party of Germany (M-L) on June 5, 1974, AQSh, f. 14/APMP, KPD/ML, v. 1974, d. 4, 1-19.

[63] Peter Platzmann, interview by Jochen Blanken, "Ein Zeitzeuge berichtet über 40 Jahre DAFG," *Deutsch-Albanische Freundschaftsgesellschaft*, September 12, 2011, https://web.archive.org/web/20120119084348/http://www.albanien-dafg.de/aus_der_dafg/interview_peter_platzmann.html.

[64] Gnoinska, "Promoting the 'China Way' of Communism in Poland and beyond during the Sino-Soviet Split," 354-356.

[65] Compare §2 of the statute: "Satzung der Gesellschaft der Freunde Albaniens e.V.", APO-Archiv, APO-KBW 056.

[66] In 1975, for example, a local group from a competing Maoist party refused to advertise an event of the friendship society because, they claimed, it demanded that only people who supported Albanian socialism could become members. Although that competing party did support Albanian socialism, it thought that this was politically unwise, because friendship societies should be open to anyone. The federal board of the friendship society complained to the national leadership of said party, reaffirming that the Society was open to anyone who paid dues and supported the statute and the matter was eventually resolved. See Letter: Kommunistischer Bund Westdeutschland Ortsgruppe Bremen to Gesellschaft der Freunde Albaniens Gruppe Bremen (December 6, 1975), APO-Archiv, APO-KBW 056; Letter: Gesellschaft der Freunde Albaniens to Zentrale Leitung des Kommunistischen Bundes Westdeutschland (January 5, 1976 [misdated as 1975]), APO-Archiv, APO-KBW 056; Letter: Ortsleitung des KBW Bremen to Gesellschaft der Freunde Albaniens e.V. - Gruppe Bremen (February 18, 1976), APO-Archiv, APO-KBW 056.

[67] "Bericht über die 'Gesellschaft der Freunde Albaniens'", APO-Archiv, APO-KBW 056.

[68] "[anonymized in source] to the Secretary of the Central Committee of the KBW" (December 4, 1973), APO-Archiv, APO-KBW 056.

[69] "Liebe Reiseinteressenten!", APO-Archiv, APO-KBW 056.

[70] "Gespräch mit einem Vertreter des albanischen Komitees für kulturelle und freundschaftliche Beziehungen mit dem Ausland," (September 1, 1972), APO-Archiv, APO-KBW 056, 1-2.

[71] Letter: [anonymized] to the KBW's Central Committee "Bericht über die Albanienreise einer GFA-Reisegruppe" (August 31, 1974), APO-Archiv, APO-KBW 056, 2.

[72] Letter: [anonymized] to the KBW's Central Committee "Bericht über die Albanienreise …".

[73] Letter: Kommunistische Volkszeitung Redaktion to Ilse [anonymized], APO-Archiv, APO-KBW 056.

[74] Letter: Editorial Board of the KVZ to [anonymized] (undated), APO-Archiv, APO-KBW 056.

[75] Brown, *West Germany and the Global Sixties*, 113.

[76] Letter: Herbert [anonymized] to Radio Tirana (April 18, 1973), AQSh, f. 509, v. 1973, d. 14, 73.

[77] Letter: [Anonymous in Source] to Radio Tirana (October 3, 1972), AQSh, f. 509, v. 1972, d. 13, 43-44.

[78] [Anonymous in Source] to Radio Tirana (June 1, 1973), AQSh, f. 509, v. 1973, d. 14, 80-81.

[79] See for example Matin-Asgari, *Iranian Student Opposition to the Shah*, 135. In this sense, the 1970s continued a trend outlined in Slobodian, *Foreign Front*. See also Slobodian, "The Borders of the Rechtsstaat in the Arab Autumn." A broader trend in the literature has also appeared on the ways in

which European societies, but especially West Germany, deliberately obscured their multi-ethnic character in the 1970s. See Chin, *The Crisis of Multiculturalism in Europe*. But the work on transnational activism in the 1970s shows that, in addition to fairly deliberate efforts by European bureaucrats, actors who sought transnational engagement in many ways also inadvertently contributed to this obscuring.

[80] Letter: [anonymized] to Radio Tirana (March 13, 1978), AQSh, f. 509, v. 1978, d. 35,12.

[81] Letter: [anonymized] to Radio Tirana (March 13, 1978)

[82] Letter: Charles [anonymized] (October 15, 1978), AQSh, f. 509, v. 1978, d. 35, 17-18.

[83] Deng, *Speech by Chairman of the Delegation of the People's Republic of China*.

[84] Lovell, *Maoism*, 227.

[85] Ernst Aust, "Kampf der Wachsenden Kriegsgefahr durch die zwei Supermächte: Für die Einheit und Solidarität der Europäischen Völker," *Roter Morgen*, April 5, 1975, 6-7.

[86] Joscha Schmierer, "Ein gefährlicher Irrweg: Propagandierung der Vaterlandsverteidigung in der Im-perialistischen Bundesrepublik," *Kommunistische Volkszeitung,* April 24, 1975, 8. See also Joscha Schmierer, "Verteidigung des BRD-Imperialismus: Gruppe Roter Morgen auf halben Weg zurück," *Kommunistische Volkszeitung,* May 22, 1975, 16. For a response accusing the KBW of having taken the side of the Soviet Union, see "KBW - Führer: Mit Linken Phrasen im Interesse des Sozialimperialismus," *Roter Morgen* (May 17, 1975) 5. For a detailed discussion of this debate see Benicke, *Von Adorno Zu Mao*.

[87] "Diplomatische Beziehungen der VR China und Chile," *Kommunistische Volkszeitung*, November 22, 1973, 12.

[88] Uwe Kräuter, "Gespräch vom 6.9.75 über Außenpolitik," APO-Archiv, APO-KBW 037, 2-3.

[89] On this point, see Kelley and Esch, "Black like Mao." In some ways, Maoism in its organized form inherited this tension from the 1960s movements inspired by anti-colonial revolutions. See for example Hosek, "Subaltern Nationalism."

[90] I am indebted here to Gary Wilder's concept of a determining contradiction between nationalism and universalism that simultaneously enables and constrains fields of possible political positions. See Wilder, *The French Imperial Nation-State*.

[91] Scales, *Cause at Heart*, ch. 6.

[92] Biberaj, *Albania and China*, 122.

[93] Hoxha, *Report on the Activity of the Central Committee of the Party of Labour of Albania*, 200, 171.

[94] "Genosse Enver Hoxha empfängt Delegationen der marxistisch-leninistischen Parteien und Organisationen," *Roter Morgen*, November 13, 1976, 2.

[95] Biberaj, *Albania and China*, 123.

[96] The editorial first appeared in the Albanian *Zëri i Popullit* on July 7, 1977. On July 15 of that year, it appeared in the KPD/ML's paper. "Theorie und Praxis der Revolution," *Roter Morgen*, July 15, 1977.

[97] "Analyse der Erfassung, Auswertung und Aufbereitung politisch-operativ bedeutsamer Erkenntnisse über maoistische und trotzkistische Organisationen, Gruppen und Kräfte," BArch, MfS, BV Berlin, AGK, Nr. 4386, 100, 43.

[98] "Analyse…," 101.

[99] "Analyse…," 108

[100] "Analyse…," 104.

[101] Confederation of Iranian Students (National Union) "Einladung zum 18. Weltkongreß der CISNU," APO-Archiv, APO-KBW 003.

[102] "Protokoll zu den Vorfällen beim CISNU 'World Congress' (March 4, 1978), APO-Archiv, APO-KBW 003.

[103] The Board for International Broadcasting, "1983 Annual Report," 2.

[104] Biweekly Plans for the Newsrooms West, East, Asia, Africa, and Latin America, AQSh, f. 509, v. 1983, d. 33, 44. See the respective articles "HDW Hamburg besetzt." 1983. *Roter Morgen*, September 16, 1; "Solidarität mit den HDW-Arbeitern." 1983. *Roter Morgen*, September 16, 1. "Widerstand auf den Werften." 1983. *Roter Morgen*, September 16, 2.

[105] See Mëhilli, "Radio and Revolution," 75.