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The Double Resistance of the German Periodical *Die Zone* (1933–34) in Paris

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The Double Resistance of the German Periodical *Die Zone* (1933–34) in Paris

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to explore the programme of the German-language anti-Nazi journal *Die Zone*, in which cultural criticism and political activism were inextricably intertwined. Published in Paris in 1933–34 as an exile periodical, it challenges the centre-periphery dichotomy by occupying a peripheral position with respect to the cultural and linguistic context to which they belong and wish to influence, while at the same time being able to rely on social and relational capital that would never be available to a platform belonging to a genuine (semi-)periphery. Taking into account the complexity of its positions, my investigation into *Die Zone* is therefore structured around three main questions. While exploring (1) the effectiveness of the journal as a platform for a community to engage in a double resistance, i.e. political action against both National Socialism and its own marginalization in French society, I equally examine (2) whether the editor-in-chief Emil Szittyá could mobilize and channel the extensive network he had built in the context of the international avant-garde in the 1910s and 1920s. Finally, (3) I tackle the perception of *Die Zone* and those who made it by the French (general or professional) public.

KEYWORDS

Die Zone, anti-Nazi periodical, German diaspora, French exile, Montparnasse

This article aims to explore the programme of the German-language anti-Nazi journal *Die Zone*, in which cultural criticism and political activism were inextricably intertwined. Published in Paris in 1933–34, *Die Zone* set out to create a platform, a free *zone* to represent and preserve the alleged genuine German culture until it was liberated from Nazism. Or, as the editor-in-chief Emil Szittyta put it in an editorial defining the journal's mission: 'It is a foolish thing to talk about the crisis of educational ideas, if only one single sensible word out of millions of voices from abroad reaches Germany and has a positive effect, it will keep Germany on life support until it recovers.'¹

To date, several studies have investigated the efforts to create platforms for the political and cultural opposition to the Third Reich, both by the diaspora of German intellectuals who relied to a greater or lesser extent on the financial and relational capital of left-wing parties and organisations, and by German-speaking intellectuals in enemy countries, who were rooted in established cultural institutions, predominantly universities.² However, works providing a horizontal overview of such outlets tend to focus on the more visible, widely circulated, multi-authored dailies and weeklies. It is therefore left to smaller-scale research and case studies to explore the more niche periodicals that are more closely tied to the personal networks of smaller groups of individuals. *Die Zone*, while displaying internal periodical codes that link it to the cultural-political magazines of the Weimar Republic, such as *Der Querschnitt* or *Das Kunstblatt*, and having authors who were also present, albeit sparsely, in the more influential exile newspapers, such as *Pariser Tageblatt*, embodies such a complexity of positions as to warrant study. Exile periodicals already challenge the centre-periphery dichotomy by occupying a peripheral position with respect to the cultural and linguistic context to which they belong and which they wish to influence, while at the same time being able to rely on social and relational capital that would never be available to a platform belonging to a genuine (semi-)periphery. However, unlike *Pariser Tageblatt*, *Die Zone* was too focused on art-related issues to be able to count on extensive, direct financial (if any) support from the various branches of the German Communist Party, so it can be assumed that it relied on networks established prior to its publication, mostly in the Weimar Republic. Its Paris-based authors had arrived in the French capital before those who fled directly from the Third Reich, so they were more likely than the latter to engage with the French discourse on immigration, and they had already put down some roots in the foreign artists' community (also known as *École de Paris*), so they could benefit from an, albeit very limited, embeddedness.

Taking into account this peculiar combination of embeddedness and peripherality, my investigation of *Die Zone* is therefore structured around three main questions. While exploring (1) the effectiveness of the journal as a platform for a community to engage in a double resistance, i.e. political action against both National Socialism and its own marginalization in French society, I equally examine (2) whether the chief editor Emil Szittyta could mobilize and channel the extensive network he had built in the context of the international avant-garde and/or anarchist circles in the 1910s and 1920s. Finally, (3) I tackle the perception of *Die Zone* and those who made it by the French (general or professional) public. In particular, I am interested in whether bias or pre-determined

1 'Es ist eine Eselei, ueber die Krisis der Bildungsideen zu sprechen, wenn von Millionen Stimmen aus dem Auslande nur ein einziges vernuenftiges Wort nach Deutschland gelangt und zuendend wirkt, so bedeutet das schon eine Ventilationsanlage zur Gesundung Deutschlands.' Emil Szittyta, 'Über Feigheit und Jammerer', *Die Zone*, 1.3 (1933), 2–6 (p. 6). All quotations in this chapter are from the original German, including *Die Zone* articles and private letters, and retain the original spelling. All translations are mine.

2 See for example Angela Huß-Michel, *Literarische und politische Zeitschriften des Exils. 1933–1945* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1987), and Roland Krebs, *Les germanistes français et l'Allemagne* (Paris: Sorbonne Université Presses, 2020), respectively.

social categories (Jewish, communist, German, Austrian, etc.) coincided with historical facts and/or the identities created by the authors themselves, and also whether *Die Zone* was able to some extent influence the dominant French political narratives that blurred the line between the Third Reich and the German culture.

Political Climate and the Origins of the Editor's Anti-Fascism

Die Zone was the brainchild of Emil Szittyá (1886–1964), a Hungarian-born German writer, journalist, art critic, and painter who lived in Paris from 1927 after spending more than a decade in Berlin. By the 1930s, he had already gained considerable experience as an editor and publisher within the international avant-garde. His best-known venture was the Franco-German journal *Les Hommes nouveaux*, which he edited and published together with Blaise Cendrars in 1911–12 in Leipzig and later in Paris under the auspices of the eponymous publishing house. The latter also brought out, in 1913, the so-called 'simultaneous poem' entitled *Prose of the Trans-Siberian and of Little Jehanne of France*, a collaborative artists' book by poet Blaise Cendrars and painter Sonia Delaunay-Terk.³ Each of Szittyá's journals (*Les Hommes nouveaux*, *Der Mistral*, *Horizont Hefte/Füzet*, *Die Zone*) shared the same outlook, typical of the international avant-garde: they promoted an international (and emphatically Franco-German) cultural cooperation and anti-war sentiment, and encouraged self-determination and free thinking. A prolific writer, he published some twenty books in German and French by the early 1930s: a collection of poems (*Die Haschischfilme des Zöllner Henri Rousseau und Tatyana Joukof mischt die Karten*, 1915), anecdotal social reports (*Das Kuriositäten-Kabinett*, 1923) as well as essays on art (*Ausgedachte Dichterschicksale*, 1928; *Le Paysage Français*, 1929), and tried his hand at playwriting.

For Szittyá, the main incentive to start *Die Zone* and thus take on the financial and administrative burden, was the complete dismantling of the liberal and left-wing German cultural press and the occupation of the general newspapers and dailies by the National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP), both of which had provided him with a platform for publication and a more or less regular income during the 1920s. Although he left Berlin due to dire financial circumstances and lived in Paris from 1927 on, he did not sever his links with his German contacts or the German press. While he started to publish essays in French on artists of the so-called *École de Paris* (foreign artists active in the French capital),⁴ he continued to work predominantly for the Austrian and German press: he was an official correspondent for the magazine *Der Querschnitt*, and regularly sent articles and reports on cultural and political topics to several newspapers. As the press historian Bernhard Fulda has pointed out, not only Nazi voices, but also the centrist parliamentary faction in the Reichstag had been calling since 1930 for restrictions on the political press.⁵ The opportunity to ban the 'Druckschriften, deren Inhalt geeignet ist, die öffentliche Sicherheit oder Ordnung zu gefährden' ['Printed materials whose content is likely to endanger public safety or order'], i.e. the opposition press, was ultimately created in time for the Reichstag elections on 5 March by the *Notverordnung Zum Schutze des deutschen Volkes* [Emergency

3 See Christine Le Quellec Cottier, 'Blaise Cendrars et les avant-gardes allemandes avant 1914', in *Blaise Cendrars et les arts*, ed. by Claude Leroy and Edmond Nogacki (Valenciennes: Presses Universitaires de Valenciennes, 2002), pp. 21–33, and Magdolna Guca, 'Why Don't We Know Who Emil Szittyá Was? The Problem of the In-Betweenness in the International Avant-Garde', in *On the Road 1909: Kassák, Szittyá, Long Poems, Short Revolutions*, ed. by Edit Sasvári and Merse Pál Szeredi (Budapest: Petöfi Literary Museum and Kassák Foundation, 2022), pp. 408–27 (pp. 415–17).

4 Szittyá's publications included *Léopold Gottlieb* (1930), *Leo von König* (1931), and *Arthur Bryks* (1932).

5 Fulda Bernhard, *Press and Politics in the Weimar Republic* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 170–71.

Decree for the Protection of the German People] of 4 February 1933.⁶ General interest magazines with a cultural focus were able to live on borrowed time for a little while longer. *Das Kunstblatt*, in which Szittyta published for the last time in the issue of 1 December 1930, ceased to exist in the spring of 1933, following the expropriation and Aryanization of the Jewish-owned publishing house Verlag Hermann Reckendorf by the Nazis and the exile of its editor-in-chief Paul Westheim.⁷ *Der Querschnitt*, to which Szittyta had contributed until 1930, was banned by the NSDAP in October 1936, in the words of Joseph Goebbels, ‘wegen dreister Unverschämtheiten’ [‘for brazen impertinence’].⁸

Ever sympathetic to radical left-wing political currents and leading a peripatetic lifestyle between legality and illegality before the First World War, Szittyta was mostly interested in anti-authoritarian revolutionary ideas, predominantly individual anarchism, testified to by his writings and a 1910 French secret police report on one of his public lectures.⁹ His main publication tackling (among others) anarchists, the 1923 *Das Kuriositäten-Kabinett* combines press genres such as the social report and the anecdote in order to present its subject to the general public, and while it does not treat the question in a scholarly or explicitly political way, it shows an in-depth knowledge of anarchist theory and practice through a wide range of references to anarchist groupings or publications. At the time, while the Hungarian police still registered him as an anarchist, active in Paris, his vagabond lifestyle and political radicalism faced legal and practical limitations in parallel with the post-war solidification of the national authorities’ control over the movement of citizens and the diminishing relevance of political anarchism, or rather, as David Wier argues, its migration into the aesthetic.¹⁰ Before Hitler’s rise to power, however, Szittyta was not interested in organized left-wing action, and as a journalist, he did not seem to have any ties to platforms of the Communist Party of Germany (KPD) or other organs of the communist propaganda outside the direct control of the local party, such as the journals coordinated by the Internationale Arbeiterhilfe (IAH, International Workers’ Aid, or the ‘Münzenberg Concern’, as it was ironically called after its head, a high-ranking KPD functionary), or

6 Michaela Enderle-Ristori, *Markt Und Intellektuelles Kräftefeld: Literaturkritik Im Feuilleton von "Pariser Tageblatt" Und "Pariser Tageszeitung" (1933–1940)* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1997), pp. 9–10.

7 Emil Szittyta, ‘(Umschau) Die Romantik und Delacroix’, *Das Kunstblatt*, 14.12 (1 December 1930), 253–54; Roland Jaeger, ‘Werbedienst für den Deutschen Werkbund: Der Verlag Hermann Reckendorf, Berlin’, *Aus dem Antiquariat*, 5.1 (2007), 3–22 (pp. 20–22).

8 Emil Szittyta, ‘Clemenceau in Anekdoten’, *Der Querschnitt*, 10.8 (1930), 548–50; Joseph Goebbels, *Tagebücher. Teil I – Aufzeichnungen 1923–1941*, ed. by Elke Fröhlichet, 9 vols (München: K. G. Saur Verlag, 1998–2006), II (2001), p. 211: ‘Gestern: gelesen, gearbeitet. Zwei Zeitschriften Inneres Reich und Querschnitt wegen dreister Unverschämtheiten verboten. Das hat wohlgetan. Die waren wieder frech wie Dreck.’ [‘Yesterday: read, worked. Two magazines “Inneres Reich” and “Querschnitt” banned for brazen impertinence. That felt good. They were again as imprudent as filthy.’]

9 See, among others, the chapter on Anarchist heroes Emil Szittyta, *Das Kuriositäten-Kabinett* (Berlin: Kraus, 1973 [1923]), pp. 187–92; Secret police report on Emil Szittyta’s lecture to German anarchists in Paris, 12 May 1910 in the file of Emile Szitya [sic] (Adolphe Schenk), Fonds de Moscou (Dossiers individuels de la Sûreté générale), National Archives of France, ref. no. 19940457/52. In the lecture, Szittyta praises the supremacy of the anarchist theory over that of the social democrats. For more detail see Magdolna Gucsa, ‘Introduction to the Social and Cultural History of Vagrancy’, in *On the Road 1909: Kassák, Szittyta, Long Poems, Short Revolutions*, ed. by Edit Sasvári and Merse Pál Szeredi (Budapest: Petöfi Literary Museum and Kassák Foundation, 2022), pp. 379–81.

10 Éva Beránné Nemes and Ervin Hollós, eds, *Megfigyelés alatt. Dokumentumok a Horthysta titkosrendőrség működéséből (1920–1944)* (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1977), pp. 204–05: a report of the political investigation department of the Budapest Police Headquarters to the Minister of the Interior on the revival of the anarchist movement (Budapest, 21 June 1935, no. inventory OLV 149. 1935-1-3067. [8431/1935.]) mentioned Szittyta’s alleged activities in Paris and those of Pierre Ramus in Vienna. Cf. David Wier, *Anarchy and Culture: The Aesthetic Politics of Modernism* (Massachusetts: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997).

the Malik Verlag publishing house of Eduard Fuchs.¹¹ By the early 1930s, he became deeply concerned about the advance of National Socialism both as a private citizen and as a writer integrated into the cultural and linguistic environment of Germany. His intertwined political concerns and personal fears for the fate of his German wife and French citizen daughter, Jeanne, are reflected in his diary entries from the early months of 1933. On 30 and 31 January, he noted: ‘1st day of the European revolution — Hitler has become Reich Chancellor [...] What will become of my child and my wife if war breaks out?’¹² On 2 February, he added: ‘Hitler is dissolving the Reichstag. Maybe the future Napoleon is here.’¹³ Szittyta was soon aware of the threat of war and of the stalemate it would mean for his family and his German wife: she would not be allowed to return to Germany with a Jewish-born Hungarian husband, and they would face internment in France as citizens of an enemy country. In a political situation which allowed him less and less room for manoeuvre, Szittyta not only created a platform for himself in 1933, but also joined the French Communist Party (PC–SFIC, Parti Communiste–Section française de l’internationale communiste — his membership cards date from 1936 and 1937).¹⁴ Had he joined the FCP earlier, it is impossible to determine, as individual paths remain difficult to document within the archives of the Communist International when it is not a question of national party leaders. The archives only contain documents on Szittyta’s activities as a journalist and art critic.¹⁵ The law of November 1938 of the French Daladier government on the ‘surveillance and control of foreign residents’, which defined undesirable foreigners as those who did not have a valid residence permit and a duly signed contract of employment with a specific company, confirmed his fears, as he fell into this category.¹⁶ In the autumn of 1939, the internment began, with a gradually widening scope, and the Szittyas soon had to flee Paris. By this time, the German exile press had been dismantled, and members of the diaspora were facing expulsion and internment. Some chose to escape these fates by committing suicide, such as Walter Benjamin and Stefan Zweig.¹⁷

An Anti-Nazi Monthly: Profile, Editors, Contributors, and Content

The two editors of *Die Zone*, Emil Szittyta and Paul Ruhstrat, published a total of eight issues with a threefold aim.¹⁸ They intended to create an anti-Nazi cultural platform

- 11 John Green, *Willi Münzenberg: Fighter against Fascism and Stalinism* (London: Routledge, 2020), pp. 158–72.
- 12 ‘1. Tag der europäischen Revolution – Hitler ist Reichskanzler geworden. [...] Was soll aus meinem Kind und meiner Frau werden wenn Krieg ausbricht?’ Emil Szittyta, *Revolutionstagesbücher 1933–39*, manuscript. Cited by Elisabeth Weinek, *Emil Szittyta: Zeitgenosse, Dichter und Maler. Pariser Jahre 1927–1964* (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Salzburg, 1987), p. 62.
- 13 ‘Hitler löst den Reichstag auf! Vielleicht ist hier der zukünftige Napoleon?’ Ibid.
- 14 Membership cards of Emil Szittyta in the PC–SFIC in 1936 and 1937, Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Germany (hereafter referred to as DLA).
- 15 In the Fonds Politique critique sociale et mouvements sociaux (Social Critical Politics and Social Movements), the following documents are accessible: the special issue of *Die Zone* about Jean Jaurès from the Bibliothèque Marxiste de Paris (ref. no. brb1207), and reviews of Szittyta’s *Soutine et son temps* [Soutine and His Time] and *82 Rêves pendant la guerre 1939–1944* [82 Dreams during the Second World War].
- 16 See ‘Surveillance et contrôle des étrangers’, *Le Temps* (14 November 1938), 2.
- 17 For an in-depth analysis of suicide as a socially and politically determined structure during the Third Reich, see Christian Goeschel, *Suicide in and because of Nazi Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).
- 18 *Die Zone* had seven regular issues and an eighth special issue, Paul Ruhstrat’s publication on Jean Jaurès; 1.1 (1933), 1.2 (1933), 1.3 (1933), 1.4 (25 December 1933), 2.1 (24 January 1934), 2.2 (20 March 1934), 2.3 (1 May 1934), 2.4 (2 October 1934). A complete series of *Die Zone* is held at the DLA, no. inventory: 721272-0. In France, complementary issues are held by the Bibliothèque nationale de France (1.1–3, 2.1–2) and the Mémorial de la Shoah (2.1 and 2.3).

similar in its effervescent, satirical style to its banned liberal or left-wing German predecessors; to promote Franco-German cooperation outside of the Third Reich; and to build a community that included the German immigrants fleeing the Third Reich as well as the German-speaking artists who had been already living in Paris but found themselves on the margins of the French society. The promotion of Franco-German mutual understanding had been an important mission of the German-speaking French and the French-speaking German intelligentsia. Szittyá himself had been involved in founding the Franco-German Institute for Reconciliation in 1913, before the First World War.¹⁹ *Die Zone's* cultural policy agenda therefore constituted an organic continuation of these efforts, favouring both international and left-wing cooperation in the form of constituting a popular front — later realized in the short-lived coalition formed by the French section of the Workers' International (SFIO), the Radical Party (PR), and the French Communist Party (FCP) that governed France from May 1936 to April 1938, opposing the Third Reich. According to press historian Angela Huß-Michel, the majority of German exile publications across Europe were left-wing: most were published directly by or affiliated with the KPD; a significant number were non-partisan popular front journals or supported by the Sopade (the German Social Democratic Party [SPD] in exile) and other left-wing socialist groups; and a significant minority were trade union or anarchist publications.²⁰ *Die Zone* and the German exile daily *Pariser Tageblatt* were mainly popular front periodicals, the latter being more influenced by the KPD.²¹

Die Zone can also be considered as the intellectual successor to *Der Querschnitt*, whose name it bears as a second subtitle, defining the magazine's profile as a 'Querschnitt durch die deutsche Kunst, Literatur, Musik, Politik, Theater, Wissenschaft' ['Cross Section of German (Fine) Art, Literature, Music, Politics, Theatre, Science']. Founded in 1921, *Der Querschnitt* soon evolved from a scrapbook-like, enhanced version of an exhibition catalogue for the gallery of the art dealer Albert Flechtheim, into a 'magazine', more akin to the American style of general-interest magazines that was prevalent at the time than to a 'Zeitschrift' — the German concept of a periodical.²² *Die Zone* followed suit, producing both entertaining and enlightening content. Both periodicals published fiction (poetry and prose in serial form, such as Paul Ruhstrat's second novel, entitled *England* in the case of *Die Zone*), exhibition reviews, as well as scientific articles in the broadest sense. Yet, because of the profound difference in the environment of the two magazines, namely that *Die Zone* was created in the no-man's land of exile following the dissolution of the Weimar Republic, a hotbed of vibrant cultural proliferation, it was much more defined by its explicitly political content. This is also the reason why the pronounced interest of *Der Querschnitt* in the occult was not carried over into *Die Zone*, despite Szittyá's demonstrated preoccupation with such themes in the past.²³

19 Emil Szittyá, 'A béke felé', *Magyar Figyelő*, 6.2 (February 1916), 347–60, (pp. 347–48). Christine Le Quellec Cottier, *Devenir Cendrars: Les années d'apprentissage* (Paris, 2004), pp. 222–23.

20 Angela Huß-Michel, *Literarische und politische Zeitschriften des Exils. 1933–1945* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1987), pp. 11–12.

21 *Pariser Tageblatt*, the most important exile daily in France, was published in Paris between 1933–36, and at its peak had a circulation of about 14,000 copies. See Huß-Michel, pp. 82–85.

22 Erika Esau, 'The Magazine of Enduring Value: *Der Querschnitt* (1921–36) and the World of Illustrated Magazines', in *The Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines, Volume III, Europe 1880–1940, Part II*, ed. by Peter Brooker et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), pp. 868–87 (pp. 869–70).

23 Szittyá's first collection of poems, *Die Haschischfilme des Zöllner Henri Rousseau und Tatyana Joukof mischt die Karten* (Budapest: Dunajec, 1915), already featured references to seances and spiritism, and in Emil Szittyá, *Das Kuriositäten-Kabinett*, he devoted a chapter to prophets of new religions ('Neue Religionsstifter', pp. 111–26), most of whom had been at some point in the 1910s in the alternative community of Monte Verità, in Ascona.

Accordingly, *Die Zone's* scientific interest was focused on the intersection of cultural history, with the social and political sciences, especially through the examination of Nazi racial science, such as eugenics and public health ideas in general, which were based on Darwinian concepts of evolution and weaponized by the NSDAP. For example, articles were published on the concept of the Jewish 'race' bearing racial characteristics inherent in their blood, or on the increasing number of suicides in the Third Reich.²⁴ By 1934, entire issues were devoted to the rapid deterioration of German domestic politics, public discourse, and cultural life. In the fifth issue alone, for example, Szittyta castigated those who disguised their political opportunism as individualism.²⁵ Another editorial pointed out that Hitler's pacifist foreign policy was merely a farce and that '[d]ie Nazis bereiten sich schon jetzt auf die Entschuldigung eines zukünftigen Krieges vor' ['the Nazis are already fabricating a pretence of a future war'].²⁶ The collaboration of Protestant church leaders with the NSDAP was also addressed, while other contributors documented the cultural expansion of Nazism as manifested in 'the still produced trash', i.e. the latest press and book publications that implicitly or explicitly advanced the NSDAP agenda.²⁷ *Die Zone* continued to publish lists of resistance fighters, those who fell victim to the Nazi purges, or were unjustly or unlawfully convicted.²⁸ This content was based on information Szittyta acquired through the communist network, and was the closest, in form, to the organized communist agitation against the Third Reich, of which the *Braunbuch über Reichstagsbrand und Hitler-Terror* (1933) (an edition denouncing the crimes of Hitler's regime) was a prima example. Parallels both in terms of formulations (fight for the 'real' Germany) and of content and arguments (the German Nationalists futile efforts to resist the NSDAP and to stress their role in the Reichstag fire) can be pointed out between *Die Zone* and the *Braunbuch*.²⁹ The latter was published by the aforementioned Comintern propagandist Willi Münzenberg's French publishing venture, the Editions du Carrefour. Although the locations of *Die Zone* (7, rue Léopold Robert) and Editions du Carrefour (89, boulevard Montparnasse) were only a ten-minute walk apart, and their acquaintances both included members of the exiled German press, circumstantial evidence detailing personal tensions suggests that Szittyta, and thus *Die Zone*, had no direct ties either to the publishing house or to Münzenberg.³⁰ However, Szittyta's network included some of Münzenberg's close collaborators: he regularly visited the foreign minister of the Spanish democratic

24 Dr. Uhlman, 'Gibt es juedisches Blut? (Eine Unterredung mit dem Biologen Marc Rubinstein)', *Die Zone*, 1.1 (1933), 12–13.

25 Emil Szittyta, 'Du Egoist', *Die Zone*, 2.1 (21 January 1934), 1–2.

26 Gustav Lenn, 'Braunau Adolfs Pazifismus', *Die Zone*, 2.1 (24 January 1934), 2–6 (p. 3).

27 Helmuth von Naso, 'Die Ouverture des deutschen Kirchenkampfes', *Die Zone*, 2.1 (24 January 1934), 6–10; and Karl Hettner, 'Es wird noch immer Schund fabriziert', *Die Zone*, 2.1 (21 January 1934), 12–13; and Kalkreuth, 'Pressekulis', *Die Zone*, 2.1 (21 January 1934), 13–15, respectively.

28 Dammert, 'Dreitausend Terrorakte, 894 Morde, 821 Jahre Gefaengnisstrafe und 1987 Verbalte', *Die Zone*, 2.1 (21 January 1934), 25–32.

29 Dudley Leigh Aman Marley, 'Vorwort', in *World Committee for the Victims of German Fascism, Braunbuch über Reichstagsbrand und Hitler-Terror* (Paris: Editions du Carrefour, 1933), pp. 5–6 (p. 5); Emil Szittyta, 'Über Feigheit und Jammerer', 2–6 (p. 5); *Braunbuch*, p. 73; Otto Hahn (Emil Szittyta), 'Wo bleibt die dt. Intelligenz?', *Die Zone*, 1.2 (1933), 8–9.

30 In 1918, Szittyta was alleged by the Hungarian press to have been spying on behalf of German or Turkish intelligence on Count Mihály Károlyi, the leader of the opposition and then Prime Minister of the Hungarian Republic who became a minority shareholder in Editions du Carrefour alongside, among others, Münzenberg's partner, Babette Gross. See respectively Mihály Károlyi, *Hit, illúziók nélkül* (Budapest: Magvető, 1977), pp. 110–14 and Hélène Roussel, 'Zu Willi Münzenbergs verlegerischer Tätigkeit im Kontext seines Umgangs mit den Medien in der Weimarer Republik und im französischen Exil', in *Deutsche Exilpresse und Frankreich 1933–1940* ed. by Hélène Roussel and Lutz Winckler (Bern: Lang, 1992), pp. 157–98 (p. 183). Although neither Münzenberg nor Károlyi were involved in the day-to-day running of the publishing house, an author believed to be a fascist agent provocateur would probably have been weeded out among the collaborators.

government Julio Álvarez del Vayo in 1933, and published a dream of Münzenberg's second at IAH, the Hungarian Louis Giberti (born László Dobos), in his 1962 dream collection *82 Rêves pendant la guerre 1939–1944* — although evidence is yet to surface as to whether they knew each other before the Second World War.³¹ Further research is needed to determine to what extent these acquaintances were directly useful for *Die Zone*, or whether Szittyá relied on any organ of the communist network for not only information, but financial support.

The role of editors is always crucial, not only because the magazines rely heavily on their network, but since they are to a certain extent an outlet for their individual projects as writers, art critics, and artists. A small enterprise like *Die Zone*, without the backing of a well-funded publisher, is even more intrinsically linked to the social status, political orientation, and personal finances of its editors, in this case: Emil Szittyá and Paul Ruhstrat. The founding editor Emil Szittyá was the dominant figure. Ruhstrat first published in the third issue and joined as editor from the fourth issue onwards. He also brought out his novel *Banlieue: Erzählung aus der Pariser Vorstadt* [Banlieue: Story from the Parisian Suburbs] in 1932 with the publishing house La Zone, which Szittyá had founded around 1928.³² This book embodies the publisher profile well: the difficulties of a German immigrant to fit into the (art) life of the Parisian suburbs have obvious political connotations, but above all represent a subculture in a journal-like, highly personal, expressionist style. Szittyá's decision to formally involve Ruhstrat and to turn both the periodical *Die Zone* and the publishing house Editions La Zone into a joint venture was motivated, at least in part, by the possibility of sharing the operating costs of the businesses, which he and Ruhstrat did on a monthly basis from 1 January 1934, as evidenced by a brief agreement signed by both parties.³³ The effort required to complete the administrative and operational tasks may also have been a crucial factor. A letter written by Ruhstrat to Szittyá just before joining the venture and Szittyá's correspondence with his Vienna-based collaborator, the writer Paul Hatvani (examined in detail in the next section) demonstrates the regular hassle involved in the distribution of the periodical.³⁴ It was also around December 1933–January 1934 that the relationship between Szittyá and his former collaborator, Hatvani, deteriorated to the point of separation, due to financial conflicts and, presumably, Szittyá's reluctance or lack of financial resources to publish Hatvani's writings in a separate volume at La Zone. While Hatvani's involvement was never as significant as Ruhstrat's, Szittyá was certainly short of a partner by the end of 1933, and it was, perhaps, the situation with

31 See Julio Álvarez del Vayo's nine letters, postcards, and telegrams to Emil Szittyá, DLA 80.1888/1.9, erroneously under the name Juan in the catalogue. See Magdolna Guca, 'Dreaming and Collecting Dreams in Occupied France: Emil Szittyá's Illustrated Collection of 82 Dreams', in *Dreams and Atrocity: The Oneiric in Representations of Trauma*, ed. by Emily-Rose Baker and Diane Otosaka (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2022), pp. 39–59.

32 On the plot, see Weinek, pp. 130–31. As of 1 May 1934, La Zone had nine publications, of which the firsts were a reissue of Szittyá's *Ausgedachte Dichterschiksale* (1927) and his monographies on *Herbert Garbe* (1928) and *Hoetger* (1928). La Zone also published Isolde von Conta's *Am Kreuz der Stadt* (1931) and Wilhelm von Stransky-Greifffens's *Die silberne Schwelle: Eine Episode* (1933).

33 See the agreement between Emil Szittyá and Paul Ruhstrat on the joint venture of the journal *Die Zone* and the publishing house La Zone, 1 January 1934, DLA 80.2238/1.

34 Letter from Paul Ruhstrat to Emil Szittyá (Montrouge, 25 December 1932), DLA 80.2238/1: 'Eben kommt diese Bestellung. Würden Sie wohl, bitte, dafür sorgen, dass das Buch abgeschickt wird und nicht zu lange die Sendung hinausgeschoben wird. Ob man nich einige Exemplare mehr schicken könnte: Diese Oldenburger Buchhandlung hat fast nur jüdische Kundschaft, die nur hier kaufen? Tun Sie doch bitte, was Sie für richtig halten. Aber es wird nicht zu lange aufgeschoben, nein?' ['This order has just arrived. Would you please make sure that the book will be sent and that the shipment will not be delayed too long. Couldn't you send a few more copies? This Oldenburg bookshop has almost only Jewish customers who buy only there? Please do what you think is right. But it won't be delayed too long, will it?']

Hatvani that led him to seek a partnership based on an equal sharing of responsibilities and burdens (as well as, hopefully, successes).

Unfortunately, Ruhstrat has been a completely overlooked figure of the German diaspora, with only two titles in the German National Library's catalogue: the novel *Banlieue*, and a special issue of *Die Zone* devoted to Jean Jaurès. We can count a third work as part of his oeuvre: according to the agreement with Szittyta, he made his 'English novel' available to the joint venture, by which the partners must have been referring to the text entitled *England*, published in sequels in *Die Zone*.³⁵ Nor is he to be found in the archival sources of the state administration and law enforcement controlling immigrants in France, in which Szittyta is present.³⁶

The character of *Die Zone* was determined by the scarcity of financial resources and Szittyta's strategies to overcome this handicap, which he had acquired in the avant-garde milieu and had already tested at *Les Hommes nouveaux* and at another exile periodical, *Der Mistral*.³⁷ He gave the periodical an illusion of greater relevance, relational capital, embeddedness, and internationality by including the same authors under several pseudonyms, as well as by referring to a network of foreign correspondents and international distribution by listing Paris, London, and New York as places of activity on the front page.³⁸ It has not been possible to verify the importance or even the existence of these correspondents and channels of distribution due to a lack of sources, but we do have some clues about the Austrian and British ones, the Expressionist writer Paul Hatvani and the anarchist Pierre Ramus, both of whom Szittyta had known for at least a decade by the time *Die Zone* was published. To a lesser extent, other members of his pre-Paris and Paris-based network are also present in the pages of the journal: he published among others a (probably ink) drawing of Chantal Quennenville, and poems by Hugo Ball to Emmy Hennings and vice versa.³⁹

35 See the agreement between Emil Szittyta and Paul Ruhstrat on the joint venture of the journal *Die Zone* and the publishing house La Zone, 1 January 1934, DLA 80.2238/1. *Die Zone*, 2.5 (24 January 1934), 18–23.

36 He is listed neither in the archives of the (Parisien) Prefecture of Police (Archives de la Préfecture de Police) nor in the fonds Moscou, the archive of the French alien control (Sûreté Générale) held at the National Archives of France, which also means that he never applied for French citizenship, since the applications are preserved within this set of documents.

37 See Magdolna Gucsa, 'Why don't We Know Who Emil Szittyta Was?', p. 416 and Debbie Lewer, 'The Avant-Garde in Swiss Exile 1914–20: *Der Mistral* (1915); *Sirius* (1915–16); *Cabaret Voltaire* (1916); *Dada* (1917–19); *391* (no. 8, 1918); *Der Zeltweg* (1919); and *Almanach der Freien Zeitung* (1918)', in *The Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines*, ed. by Peter Brooker et al., 3 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009–2013), III (2013), pp. 1032–59.

38 P. R., Nordinger, Ein namenloser, Dr. Sauerbrot, Kalkeruth, and Karl Stammer are suspected to be those of Szittyta judging by the subject or style of the articles. Weinek, pp. 125–130 argued that Szittyta was also behind Karl Hattner and Helmut von Naso.

39 Front page of *Die Zone*, 2.1 (24 January 1934). Seven letters from Quennenville to Szittyta are held at the DLA (80.2217,1–7), dating from 1928 onwards which suggests that they met in Paris. Emmy Hennings – Hugo Ball, 'Gedichte von Emmy Hennings und Hugo Ball', *Die Zone*, 1.2 (1933), p. 7. On the relationship of the three authors see Walter Fähnders, 'Emil Szittyta, Emmy Ball-Hennings und Hugo Ball', in *Hugo Ball Almanach*, 5 (Neue Folge, 2014), 65–76.

Die Zone's Network: International Correspondents in Vienna and in London

As well as contributing to the content of the magazine, Paul Hatvani was also involved in the distribution of *Die Zone*,⁴⁰ as was Richard Lányi,⁴¹ a Vienna-based bookseller and publisher.⁴² Hatvani's involvement dated back to the launch of *Die Zone*, and although the exact number of copies sold remains unknown, as he only provided data in percentages, by January 1934 sales in Austria seemed, if not satisfactory, at least encouraging.⁴³ So much so, that Hatvani was able to spend some money on advertising ('propaganda').⁴⁴ However, the relative success did not last. Hatvani's 1 June 1934 letter to Szittyta vividly illustrates the wide range of problems that arose in connection with the international distribution of any newspaper, and which were particularly acute for a newly founded newspaper with a small circulation such as *Die Zone*: in particular, the difficulties of delivering international mail, stocking copies, returning unsold copies to the publisher, settling provisional and final accounts, realising advantageous currency exchange, dealing with the lack of secure money transfers, and anticipating expenditure:

Dear Mr Szittyta,

[...] I am aware of the hopelessness of achieving success with your paper in the present situation; as I wrote to you on 24th February, I have received a total of 14.75 shillings from the ERBE and on 14th March asked you to contact the ERBE and Lanyi [*sic*] (who owes you about 8 shillings) directly for the final settlement.⁴⁵ It is really not acceptable that you are now coming at me with unfounded accusations! It is not so easy to send the money to Paris, even if it

40 Letter from Paul Hatvani to Emil Szittyta (9 December 1933), DLA 80.2060. 'Kommt mein Oesterreich-Artikel im naechsten Heft? Es ist fuer den hiesigen Vertrieb unbedingt notwendig, dass etwas ueber Oesterreich drinnen steht.' ['Will my article on Austria appear in the next issue? It is absolutely necessary for local sales that something is written about Austria.']

41 Richard Lányi (born Löwy; Vienna, 1884–Auschwitz, 1942), bookseller, collector, and publisher of Austrian artists such as Egon Schiele and Oskar Kokoschka. His expropriated art collection was successfully claimed as restitution under the Second Restitution Act by his widow who was deemed 'Aryan' under the Nuremberg laws. See Sonja Niederacher's entry on Richárd Lányi in *Lexikon der österreichischen Provenienzforschung* [accessed 1 April 2023].

42 Letter from Paul Hatvani to Emil Szittyta (24 December 1933), DLA 80.2060. 'Ich danke Ihnen herzlich fuer den lieben Brief und ebenso fuer die beiden Hefte Nr.4. Ich bin augenblicklich verreist und komme erst am 2. Januar nach Wien, wo ich dann die fuer mich reservierten 50 Hefte uebernehmen werde; diese bekommt Lanyi.' ['Thank you very much for the lovely letter and also for the two booklets No. 4. I'm on a trip at the moment and won't be in Vienna until January 2nd, where I will then take over the 50 booklets reserved for me; I'll get them to Lányi.'] See also the letter of Paul Hatvani to Emil Szittyta (29 January 1934), DLA 80.2060: 'Lanyi sagte mir nach einigen Nummern rechne er auf einen ganz schönen Verkauf bei der österreichischen Leserschaft, die sehr konservativ ist, dauert es immer einige Zeit, ehe ein neues Blatt sich durchgesetzt hat. Er lasst Sie uebrigenn gruessen!' ['After a few issues, Lányi told me that he was expecting quite a sale from the Austrian readership, which is very conservative, and that it always takes some time before a new journal caught on. By the way, he sends his regards!']

43 Letter from Paul Hatvani to Emil Szittyta (17 January 1934), DLA 80.2060. 'Das neue Heft ist bereits seit ungefaehr zwei Wochen im Vertrieb; ich werde am 25. Januar mit der ERBE abrechnen und habe dann vielleicht auch eine Moeglichkeit, Ihnen sofort das Geld in franzoesischen Francs zu ueberweisen. (Sie wissen, dass dies auf normalem Weg sehr langwierig ist.) Die ERBE ist mit dem Vertrieb zufrieden, wenn man den Verkauf anderer Blaetter beruecksichtigt; es werden im Durchschnitt in Wien nur cca 10% abgesetzt, bei der Zone sind es bisher fastl 20%. Der Verkauf wird sicher noch besser werden; ich habe jetzt Einiges fuer Propaganda eingeleitet.' ['The new issue has already been in distribution for almost two weeks; I will settle the account with the ERBE on 25 January and may then also have a way of transferring the money to you immediately in French francs. (You know that this takes a long time in the normal way.) The ERBE is satisfied with the sales, taking into account the sales of other journals; on average only about 10% are sold in Vienna, whereas *Die Zone* it is almost at 20% so far. Sales will certainly get better; I have now allocated some money towards promotion.']

44 Ibid.

45 The ERBE was Austrian distributor of periodicals.

is a small amount. Please give me an address where I can send the amount; perhaps in July I will be able to send the amount to Switzerland, from where the transfer is easy. But what should I do with the unresolved issues with the ERBE? I am perhaps even more embarrassed than you are because you think God knows what I have done with your issues [of *Die Zone*]! And I don't even want to mention the inconvenience and costs I have had with *Die Zone*! If you have no one here to whom I can give the money, I will send you the banknotes in an ordinary letter, but you must agree to this kind of delivery in advance. However, you should contact the ERBE directly regarding the final settlement. [...] Yours sincerely, Paul Hatvani⁴⁶

If cutting costs — which were already kept to a minimum with Hatvani's contribution likely being unpaid or severely underpaid — did not seem possible, increasing sales might have helped, if not to improve profitability, at least to break even on Austrian distribution. According to Hatvani, the lack of interest on the part of the Austrian public was not only due to the political climate, but also to the lack of information about the paper, which stemmed from the low level of marketing expenditure and human resources involved in the distribution (in the case of *Die Zone*, essentially Hatvani's unpaid work).

Although the dispute seems to have been settled in the same month with Hatvani, who did send to Szittyta the income from the distribution of *Die Zone*, and suggested again that he contact ERBE directly for the remaining sum, their falling out seemed irreversible.⁴⁷ As the distribution in Austria was suspended and Szittyta's decision to join forces with Paul Ruhstrat did not seem financially fruitful enough, Szittyta was ultimately forced to abandon the project. His family situation may also have contributed to this: his financial difficulties were compounded by the birth of his daughter Jeanne on 12 April 1931, which meant that he had to support a family of three.

The Austrian communist-anarchist Pierre Ramus was among the first to be notified by Szittyta of the launch of *Die Zone* in 1933. The place and date of their first acquaintance is unclear, but Szittyta had already referred to Ramus's activities in his 1923 book *Das Kuriositäten-kabinett* [Cabinet of Curiosities] which focused on unconventional figures and social groups such as artists, political leaders, anarchists,

46 Letter from Paul Hatvani to Emil Szittyta (16 June 1934), DLA 80.2060/21. 'Lieber Herr Szittyta, [...] Ich sehe die Aussichtslosigkeit ein, bei den herrschenden Verhältnissen mit Ihrem Blatte hier Erfolge zu erzielen; ich habe, wie Ihnen am 24. Februar geschrieben, im Ganzen von der ERBE S 14,75 erhalten und Sie am 14. März ersucht, wegen der Endabrechnung sich direkt an die ERBE und an Lanyi (der Ihnen cca S 8.- schuldet) zu wenden. Es geht wirklich nicht an, dass Sie nun mit unmotivierten Anschuldigungen über mich kommen! Wie man das Geld, auch wenn es sich um kleine Beträge handelt, nach Paris bekommt, ist nicht so einfach. Geben Sie mir doch irgendeine Adresse an, wo ich die Sache übergeben kann; ich werde vielleicht im Juli eine Möglichkeit haben, den Betrag nach der Schweiz zu schicken, von wo aus die Ueberweisung leicht ist. Aber was soll ich mit den Heften machen, die ich noch habe und die bei der ERBE liegen? Mir ist die Sache vielleicht noch peinlicher als Ihnen, weil sie glauben, Gott weiss was ich mit Ihren Heften gemacht habe! Dabei will ich Ihnen gar nichts davon erzählen, welche Unannehmlichkeiten und Kosten ich mit der Zone hatte! Sollten Sie hier Niemanden haben, dem ich das Geld übergeben kann, so will ich Ihnen die Banknoten in einem gewöhnlichen Brief einsenden aber Sie müssen sich im Voraus mit dieser Art der Uebersendung einverstanden erklären. Wegen der Endabrechnung mit der ERBE wollen sie sich aber direkt an diese wenden. [...] Hochachtungsvoll, Paul Hatvani'

47 Letter from Paul Hatvani to Emil Szittyta (22 June 1934), DLA 80.2060/22: 'Ich lege Ihnen also den Betrag hier bei; u. z. sende ich Ihnen der Einfachheit halber ffrcs 55,- in Noten, was etwas 15,80 entspricht. Ich bitte Sie nochmals, sich an die ERBE direkt zu wenden, damit man Ihnen den eventuellen Rest verrechnet; ich bin seit der Neuordnung der Dinge bei der ERBE dort ausser Kontakt.' [I am therefore enclosing the amount here; for the sake of simplicity I am sending you 55,- French francs in notes, which corresponds to about 15,80 Schillings. Once again, I would ask you to contact ERBE directly so that you can be billed for the remainder; I have been out of contact with ERBE since things were reorganised there.]

vagabonds, and homosexuals.⁴⁸ In 1933, Ramus, who had recently been forced to flee his country and live in exile in England, was not able to give Szittyta any significant support. However, they were planning a mutually beneficial collaboration in the form of a series of public lectures, the profits from which would support both the organizer (*Die Zone*, in this case) and the lecturer:

So here I am, utterly ruined, with a material livelihood that has to be rebuilt. I am not complaining, because why should I have a different fate from so many others who have fought and are fighting the ruling powers far less than myself. Would it not be possible, through *Die Zone* to organize literary conferences in which I could give a few lectures? If you could give me a share of the net proceeds of these lectures, it would perhaps be a good source of income for your paper and increase its influence. I have been told that Paris is swarming with Germans. I can speak on any artistic and intellectual subject, as well as sociological and scientific ones, without the French government taking offence. My lectures, always well-attended, have kept our journal [i.e. *Erkenntnis und Befreiung*] going for decades.⁴⁹

This was a widespread practice within the labour movement and left-wing political organizations in general, as well as among periodicals that sought to build a community around them, and Szittyta himself had previously given such lectures in Brussels and in Paris.⁵⁰ Unfortunately, none of them could finance Ramus's trip at the time, and it was doubtful that the Germans teeming in Paris would constitute a paying audience. In the end, it was Szittyta who helped Ramus's daughter, Lily Grossman, financially, by employing her as a typewriter at *Die Zone* between issues 3 and 4 of the journal, that is, in the autumn of 1933 for which Ramus was incredibly grateful, calling the news 'like a ray of sunshine in a dark night'.⁵¹ Their correspondence shows that Szittyta regularly sent copies of *Die Zone* to Ramus, who distributed it, albeit on a small scale, to German-speaking immigrants in London.

48 Emil Szittyta, *Das Kuriositäten-Kabinett*, pp. 134, 139, 141–43, 170–79, 182–83.

49 Letter from Pierre Ramus (Rudolf Grossmann) to Emil Szittyta (31 October 1933), DLA 80.2046/12: 'So bin ich denn nun hier, als total Ruinierter, dessen materielle Grundlage absolut neu aufgebaut werden muss, Ich beklage mich nicht, denn warum soll ich ein anderes Schicksal haben, als so viele andere, die bei weitem weniger als ich die herrschenden Mächte bekaempft haben und bekaempfen, Waere es nicht moeglich, durch die "Zone" literarische Vortraege zu veranstalten, in denen ich einige Vortraege halten koennte? Wenn Sie mir einen Teil des Reinertraegnissos derselben zu kommen lassen koennten, dann wuerde dies vielleicht eine gute Einnahmequelle fuer Ihr Blatt werden koennen und dessen Einflusskreis entsprechend vergroessert. Mir wurde gesagt, dass es in Paris von Deutschen wimmelt, Ich kann ueber jedes kuenstlerische und schoengeistige, aber auch soziologisch-wissenschaftliche Thema sprechen, ohne dass die franz. Regierung dagegen Anstoss nehmen wuerde, Jahrzehnte lang haben meine Vortraege, immer gut besucht, unser Blatt erhalten.'

50 Magdolna Guca, 'Introduction to the Social and Cultural History of Vagrancy', pp. 379, 381.

51 Letter from Pierre Ramus (Rudolf Grossmann) to Emil Szittyta (26 November 1933), DLA 80.2046/14: 'Unsere Tochter Lilly hat uns von Ihrer so guetigen Hilfeleistung fuer sie, in der Beschaffung eines Postens bei Ihrer gediegenen Zeitschrift geschrieben. Es ist mir diese Botschaft, wie ein Sonnenstrahl in dunkler Nacht. Das werde ich Ihnen niemals vergessen, was Sie da fuer mein grosses Maedel leisten. Aber Sie werden mit ihr auch zufrieden sein, denn sie beherrscht geradezu ausgezeichnet alle Gebiete einer Redaktion und Administration und durch ihre Sprachenkenntnisse sehr vielfach verwendbar, Und dabei absolut vertrauenswuerdig.' ['Our daughter Lilly has written to us about the good work you have done for her in getting her a position in your excellent magazine. This message is like a ray of sunshine in a dark night. I will never forget what you are doing for my great girl, but you will also be satisfied with her, for she has an excellent command of all areas of editing and administration and her knowledge of languages makes her very versatile.']

Local and International Embeddedness: The Advertisement Section

Defining itself as ‘not a journal for emigrants, but a platform for free thinkers who want to capture and influence the *zeitgeist* of the time’, *Die Zone* did not limit itself to representing a German emigrant community, but the alleged ‘genuine, independent German culture’, whose representatives were not necessarily born and bred Germans.⁵² However, the periodical’s decision to publish exclusively in German severely limited its potential target audience and pushed *Die Zone* into a minority position, which it attempted to challenge through its self-definition as a free-thinking platform and its international distribution. The advertising section reflects this contradiction between the imposed local and the aspirational international character of the journal.

Publications brought out under the auspices of the publishing house La Zone, including the editor’s own books, naturally featured prominently in the advertising section of the periodical.⁵³ The international character of the journal stemmed mainly from Szitty’s network of authors, publishers, and anarchist connections. Alongside the publications of Editions La Zone, there was an advertisement for Fiba Verlag, a publishing house in Vienna that published travel guides and music as well as books on Jewish themes, and for *Erkenntnis und Befreiung*, an Austrian anarchist journal and publishing house.⁵⁴ The latter was founded in 1918 by Szitty’s friend Pierre Ramus, who returned to Vienna after being sentenced to forced labour and interned for refusing military service during the First World War.⁵⁵ Ramus published his works alongside classics of anarchism, such as those by Peter Kropotkin. Szitty therefore continued to rely heavily on his German and Austrian acquaintances from the bohemian milieu of the 1910s and 1920s, but the scope of these collaborations was limited by political and financial circumstances. After the mutual termination of his collaboration with Hatvani, and in the absence of Ramus, who was already in exile in London at the time of the publication of *Die Zone*, Szitty had to secure these Austrian collaborations through others: he must have known a number of the contributors to *Erkenntnis und Befreiung*, including the playwright and anarchist Robert Bodanzky (alias Danton), whom he mentioned as early as 1923, in his *Das Kuriositäten-Kabinett*.⁵⁶ But Paul Hatvani might have also acted as intermediary: his involvement not only in the distribution of *Die Zone* but also in helping to create the financial conditions for its publication is evident from his letters to Szitty.⁵⁷ His interest in *Die Zone*’s financial stability was not independent

52 This mission statement of *Die Zone* can be read next to the impressum in each issue.

53 For example *Die Zone*, 2.1 (24 January 1934), 32.

54 See their ads in *Die Zone*, 2.3 (1 May 1934), front page verso.

55 See the article R. D., ‘Pierre Ramus’, in *Dictionnaire des militants anarchistes* [accessed 1 April 2023].

56 Emil Szitty, *Das Kuriositäten-Kabinett* (Berlin: Kraus, 1973 [1923]), p. 41.

57 Letter from Paul Hatvani to Emil Szitty (24 December 1933), DLA 80.2060: ‘In Inseraten war vor Neujahr kaum etwas zu machen; die Leute haben auch die Muss-Inserate sehr eingeschränkt, man kann nur dann einigen Erfolg haben, wenn das Blatt besser bekannt sein wird. Die ERBE erwartet sich grösseren Erfolg, wenn einiges ueber Wien darinnensteht, dann kann man auch auf Inserate und eventuell bezahlte Beiträege (Kunstsammler usw.) rechnen.’ [‘Hardly anything could be done in advertising before the New Year; people have also severely restricted the mandatory advertisements; one can only have some success if the paper becomes better known. The ERBE expects greater success when something is raging about Vienna; then you can also count on advertisements and possibly paid contributions (art collectors, etc.).’]

of the explicit hope that Szittyta would one day have the means to publish some of his writings in an individual volume.⁵⁸

The local focus is embodied in personal advertisements testifying to the intention to create a Franco-German community or at least to provide a space for personal initiatives and networking. In one of these announcements, for instance, an intelligent French woman hoped to go on a language exchange trip to the Rhine with a German girl. According to another typical advertisement, a thirty-two-year-old German Jewish immigrant salesman with relevant knowledge of the textile industry was looking for any kind of position. This category of advertisements evidences the intensification of German immigration to France.⁵⁹ The various Paris-specific commercial advertisements paint a picture of a locally embedded newspaper, trying to cater specifically to an artistic community or to help sell local products: 'Wacker and Bondy' were involved in the transport and packaging of works of art, Mr Iffenecker offered furnished and unfurnished studios to artists, while a certain Joseph Hecht tried to sell his engravings of famous Parisian sights and monuments. *Die Zone* seemed to be struggling to sell the entirety of its advertising space: there are blanks in the advertising section, and the editors emphatically asked readers to refer to them when buying the advertised product or service, no doubt to valorize the magazine as a marketing tool.⁶⁰ The local hospitality industry was also present: the announcement of the famous artist's café, Café du Dôme, where a copy of *Die Zone* could have probably been found and read, is next to those of the vegetarian restaurant Le Rêve and the Prater which, true to his name, offered Viennese specialties such as Apfelstrudel and Sacher cake to the homesick Austrian émigrés.⁶¹ The addresses of the cafés, restaurants, and service providers in Montrouge (a municipality in the southern Parisian suburbs), in the Cité Falguière, and in the Montparnasse quarter are all within a radius of about five kilometres. This area was clearly identified in the press, and in the vernacular, with a mainly émigré artistic community, so it is safe to conclude that if a German-speaking French reader had opened *Die Zone*, he would have clearly known to place it as a newspaper of the *métèques* [foreigners], of the 'Central Powers of Montparnasse', referring to the citizens of the Central Powers during the First World War, namely Germans, Austrians, and Hungarians.⁶² The antipathies that gave rise to these derogatory terms were fuelled by xenophobia, antisemitism, and the misguided self-defence of a population hit by recession and unemployment after the stock market crash. As the historian Gérard Noiriel points out, referring to the 1931 census, which recorded the peak of this process, more than two million immigrants settled in France in the decade between 1920 and 1930, putting the country at the top of the European immigration statistics.⁶³ These numbers were further inflated by Germans fleeing the rise to power of the NSDAP, and later by Austrians and Poles seeking refuge from the expansion of the Third Reich.

58 Ibid. 'Die Manuskripte von mir, die Sie nicht mehr verwenden koennen, bitte ich Sie mir doch zurueck zu schicken zu einem Selbstdruck, der ja gewiss keine Schande ist, habe ich leider jetzt gar kein Geld. Hoffentlich wird der Vertrieb der "Zone" in Oesterreich einmal so viel tragen, dass Sie etwas von mir in Verlag nehmen koennen.' [I would ask you to send me back the manuscripts that you can no longer use; Unfortunately, I don't have any money for a self-print, which is certainly not a disgrace. I hope that the distribution of "Zone" in Austria will one day carry enough money for you to be able to publish something from me.]

59 *Die Zone*, 1.1 (1933), back cover.

60 Blanks in the advertisements section: 2.3 (1 May 1934), back cover. *Die Zone's* demand to refer to the journal: 1.1 (1933), p. 17.

61 *Die Zone*, 2.1 (24 January 1934), back cover.

62 *Métèques* is derived from the Greek word *metoikos*, initially referring to a foreigner domiciling in the city-state. In the 1920s, this pejorative term was used to describe foreigners living in Paris, whose presence was deemed undesirable by the French state and society.

63 Gérard Noiriel, *Immigration, antisémitisme et racisme en France (XIX^e-XX^e siècle): Discours publics, humiliations privés* (Paris: Fayard, 2007), p. 305.

The arguments put forward by those in favour of restricting immigration were mainly economic and cultural. On the one hand, they emphasised the growing scarcity on the demand side of the labour market, which increased competition between foreigners and French natives. On the other hand, the ‘unassimilability’ of certain immigrants (notably the ‘savages’ coming from the colonies and the ‘enemy within’, the Jews) was seen as a threat to the French ‘national character’ and cultural dispositions, and thus to the fabric of French society.⁶⁴ Supporting the legitimacy of the immigrants’ presence on French soil, and that of artists in the traditional French art institutions and in the Parisian art market, was a key issue for all immigrant periodicals.

It is from this perspective that the second pillar of *Die Zone*’s second mission emerged: to promote a programme of integration for immigrants, while at the same time presenting them to the German-speaking French as deserving, assimilable, and worthy of inclusion. Paul Ruhstrat’s editorial is a compact illustration of this agenda:

It remains to be seen whether the French way of life will survive the crisis, but it must be acknowledged that this old-fashioned country, in its own way, has often done more to alleviate need than more developed countries, that it has retained its old generosity in dealing with foreigners, in helping artists and intellectuals. Over the past year, an influx of German emigrants has arrived in a city that was previously almost abandoned by foreigners; on Montparnasse and the Champs-Élysées, you can hear people speaking almost only German; a piece of Berlin now lives up here. Will Paris digest these newcomers the way it digested the Russians, the Italians, the Spanish? [...] Those who have lived in Paris for a long time sometimes wish that the newcomers would be advised to respect the French language and to fit in where tact, not business, dictates. At the same time as emigration, the poison of Hitler’s propaganda is beginning to penetrate France. Let us hope that France will remain immune to any outside influence.⁶⁵

Unlike Szittyá’s earlier French publications which had received some, albeit sparse, reception in the French press, neither *Die Zone* nor the publications of the publishing house La Zone resonated with the French public.⁶⁶ This occurred, in part, because of their decision to publish in German; because of the increasing German-centric focus of the material included in the periodical (*Die Zone* moved away from current debates in the Parisian art scene — such as the one about the legitimacy of the École de Paris, or about the presence of foreign artists in the French institutions of art and art market); and lastly, because of their rather limited means of production, distribution, and

64 Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 296–300.

65 Paul Ruhstrat, ‘Paris 1934’, *Die Zone*, 2.1 (21 January 1934), 10–12 (pp. 11–12) : ‘Man kann heute noch nicht sagen, ob die französische Lebensform die Krise überdauern wird; dass dies altmodische Land oft in primitiver Weise mehr zur Linderung der Not getan hat als moderne Länder, dass es in der Behandlung von Ausländern, in der Hilfe für Künstler und geistige Arbeiter seine alte Grosszügigkeit bewahrt hat, muss schon heute anerkannt werden. In die von Ausländern fast verlassene Stadt kam im Laufe des vergangenen Jahres der Zustrom deutscher Emigranten, in Montparnasse und auf den Champs-Élysées hört man fast nur deutsch sprechen, manches Stück Berlin lebt jetzt hier auf. Wird Paris auch diese neuen Gäste verdauen, wie es Russen, Italiener, Spanier verdaut hat? [...] Wer schon lange in Paris lebt, hat heute manchmal den Wunsch, den Neuangekommenen den Rat zu geben, Französisches mehr zu respektieren und sich auch dort einzufügen, wo es nicht das Geschäft, sondern der Takt erfordert. Gleichzeitig mit der Emigration beginnt das Gift der Hitlerpropaganda in Frankreich einzudringen. Wir hoffen, dass Frankreich sich gegen jeden Einfluss von aussen immun zeigen wird.’

66 Reviews of Szittyá’s publications, notably *Le Paysage Français*, among others: *L’Art vivant* (1 January 1929), 708; *Les Nouvelles littéraires* (1 June 1929), 10; *Mercure de France* (1 May 1931), 704–08.

marketing.⁶⁷ They did, however, find an echo in ‘sick Germany’, infected by Nazism.⁶⁸ In his letter to Szittyta, Ruhstrat reported two reviews of his *Banlieu*: ‘a fabulous one in the *Munchener Post*, then one in the *Deutsche Zeitung*, which thinks I’m paid for by the French government, and generally regrets having to deal with these kinds of things’.⁶⁹ The *Deutsche Zeitung*’s review, Ruhstrat’s above-quoted article, *Paris 1934*, and Szittyta’s praise of an independent France that guaranteed freedom of the press even to citizens of enemy countries eloquently demonstrate why the Third Reich considered periodicals such as *Die Zone* to be a phenomenon that had to be eliminated.⁷⁰

Continuing the Resistance after the End of *Die Zone*

Although Szittyta was no longer able to finance *Die Zone* after 1934, he did not give up his anti-Nazi activism in the shape of journalism. Paul Ruhstrat, on the other hand, no longer appeared in the periodicals in which his co-editor continued to write in both German and French. Szittyta published three articles in the *Pariser Tageblatt*, the main daily newspaper of the German exile community.⁷¹ We lack the sources to determine exactly how Szittyta came to be featured in *Pariser Tageblatt*, but he was embedded in the diaspora through his Berlin contacts. The former editor-in-chief of *Der Querschnitt*, Paul Westheim, who published a serial novel in the *Pariser Tageblatt*, may have been an intermediary.

As his adopted name, Szittyta (Schytian in Hungarian), was difficult to spell and pronounce in French, he published his articles under the pseudonym Emil Lenit, mainly in popular-front organs, such as the daily *La République* and the weekly *Vendredi*.⁷² In *Vendredi*, for example, Szittyta continued to denounce the antisemitic efforts of the Nazi intelligentsia to lay a theoretical basis for the expulsion of Jews from German society on racial grounds. In an article co-authored with Juliette Pary, Szittyta alluded to the oeuvre of Adolf Bartels and to genealogical reference works such as the Semi-Gotha, an anonymous genealogical collection of German nobility of actual or supposed/alleged Jewish descent.⁷³ While satirizing a National Socialist work, the Antisemitic Dictionary,

67 Due to a lack of sources (no subscription forms or printing invoices were preserved, and even the vast majority of issues were lost or destroyed during or after the Second World War), the number of copies can only be estimated: *Die Zone* may have circulated in a few hundred copies, probably never reaching a thousand.

68 Szittyta’s expressions from Emil Szittyta, ‘Über Feigheit und Jammerer’, p. 6: ‘Ausserhalb des kranken Deutschlands gibt es noch zwanzig Millionen Deutsche, die noch nicht krank, die noch nicht Elendsgeschrei sind.’ [‘That’s why we’re trying to express our opinion from here to Germany. Outside of sick Germany, there are still twenty million Germans who are not yet sick, who are not yet cries of misery.’]

69 Letter from Paul Ruhstrat to Emil Szittyta (Montrouge, 25 December 1932), DLA 80.2238/1.

70 Emil Szittyta, ‘Die Fehler der Republik’, *Die Zone*, 2.3 (1 May 1934), 1–2.

71 Notably, Emil Szittyta, ‘Kotzebue spaziert durch Paris. Deutsche Vergangenheit in der französischen Hauptstadt’, *Pariser Tageblatt*, 2.234 (3 August 1934), 4; ‘Die Spelunken, in denen Börne Demokratie predigte: Aus dem Leben eines Emigranten’, *Pariser Tageblatt*, 2.236 (5 August 1934), 4; ‘Marx in Paris’, *Pariser Tageblatt*, 2.250 (19 August 1934), 3.

72 *La République* was launched on the occasion of the 1928 elections as the propaganda organ of the Radical Party. The title reached its peak in October 1936 with a circulation of 142,000. However, the constant polemics with the communists caused the paper to distance itself from the Popular Front. *Vendredi* [Friday] was a French left-wing weekly that appeared during the years of the Popular Front.

73 Juliette Pary, pseudonyme of Juliette Gourfinkel (Odessa, Russian Empire, 1903–Vevey, Switzerland, 1950), journalist, writer, and translator, among others, of Agatha Christie and Herman Hesse. Adolf Bartels (1862–1945), Protestant pastor, journalist, poet, and representative of the Heimatkunst movement. His works included a rabidly antisemitic history of German literature *Die deutsche Dichtung der Gegenwart* (1897). He was an active supporter of National Socialism from the 1920s, and his extensive oeuvre shaped the cultural policy of the Third Reich after 1933. It has been pointed out, since, that the Semi-Gotha was created by Wilhelm Pickl von Witkenberg with the collaboration of Philipp Stauf, Bernhard Koerner, and others in close cooperation with the German National Association of Writers.

allegedly in progress under the direction of Bartels and with the cooperation of about a hundred scholars, the authors published a mock list of alleged Jews, claiming it to be an excerpt from the Antisemitic Dictionary. This demonstrates their dark sense of humour, which, incidentally, was characteristic of the Weimar Republic's press and of Szittyá's own writings:

Who is Jewish? Why? Field Marshal Hindenburg — agreed to preside over a republic. Baron Sacher Masoch — only a Jew could invent masochism. [...] Franz Liszt — lived in France, which is suspicious. [...] William II [*sic*] — had a Judaized grandmother: Queen Victoria of England, a friend of Disraeli. [...] Lloyd George — Freemason, forced by the Elders of Zion to sign the Treaty of Versailles. (Note: Lately, Lloyd George has put the German anti-Semites in a difficult situation, because he, the old liberal, is now sympathizing with the Nazis! The latter have just forbidden him to be called a Jew!)⁷⁴

Conclusion

Die Zone had to put up a cultural struggle on two fronts and implement a complex programme to address its double-peripherality: it had to represent the alleged genuine, that is anti-Nazi, autonomous German culture against the Third Reich, while at the same time offering an image of non-threatening integrability to the small section of French society available to it as an audience: mainly intellectuals and a fraction of the middle class with professions requiring language skills, such as commercial agents and high-ranking public servants. This programme promised more struggle than success, but it did allow Szittyá to maintain or revive some of the contacts he had established over the previous two decades within the artistic community and among anarchists in the Weimar Republic, Austria, and Paris, while continuing a cultural mission with his general interest magazine, the profile of which had in fact originated in 1920s Berlin. At the same time, *Die Zone* also provided a platform for the existing German-speaking artistic community of Montparnasse, which could offer guidance to those who had arrived more recently after the fall of the Weimar Republic.

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74 'Qui est juif? — Pourquoi? Le maréchal Hindenburg — a consenti à présider une république. [...] Le baron Sacher Masoch — seul, un juif a pu fonder le masochisme. [...] Franz Liszt — a vécu en France, ce qui est suspect. [...] Guillaume II — a une grand-mère enjuivée: la reine Victoria d'Angleterre, amie de Disraeli. [...] Lloyd George — Franc-maçon, obligé par les Sages de Sion de signer le Traité de Versailles. (A noter: ces derniers temps, Lloyd George a mis les antisémites allemands dans une situation pénible, car, lui, le vieux libéral, sympathise maintenant avec les nazis! Ces derniers viennent d'interdire de le traiter de Juif! Emile Lenit (Szittyá Emil) and Juliette Pary, 'Tout le monde est juif', *Vendredi*, 2.5 (31 January 1936), 10. William II seems to be an error, they likely meant George V.

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