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Globalization in State Socialist East Central Europe

Looking Beyond Dominant Narratives

Béla Tomka

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Preface

"The number of scholarly works on »globalization« continues to explode. The number of scholarly works that open by citing this explosion continues to explode."[1] Michael Lang's *bon mot,* formulated almost twenty years ago, remains valid today, and just as he, despite all the malice of his comment, could not escape referring to the boom in the literature on globalization, I myself also cannot avoid noting the steady and massive growth in the scholarship on globalization since the above observation was made.

All the more so as this volume is largely concerned with assessing the novel approaches introduced and the questions raised by recent scholarly literature on globalization, specifically historical research on globalization in East Central Europe after World War II. In fact, the last decade and a half has seen the invigoration of international academic discourse and a significant increase in the number of publications on the globalization of the state socialist countries throughout Eastern Europe, including East Central Europe. They have often advanced remarkable new arguments, and their global perspective has clearly helped to provide a more complete picture of the history of state socialism. Such a broad approach might even bring further benefits: in particular, they can help to revitalize historical research in East Central Europe where historiography is still dominated

[1] Michael Lang, "Globalization and Its History," *Journal of Modern History* 78, no. 4 (2006): 899.

by various versions of ethnocentrism. From this perspective, however, it is a disadvantage that the participation of East Central European scholars in the dialogue is rather moderate, since the overwhelming majority of the key publications on the subject, which will be discussed in detail later, do not actually come from the region.

In the light of this, the present volume is intended to contribute to the research on the globalization of the East Central European state socialist countries through an empirical comparative analysis of the historical paths followed by three countries in the region. The book often explicitly challenges previous research findings and interpretations. In doing this, I hope to help identify tasks and opportunities for research on the globalization process in East Central Europe—and Eastern Europe in general—during the decades following World War II.

In the course of my research, I have been fortunate to have had the opportunities to exchange views on this topic with a number of colleagues. I would like to thank the members of the MTA–SZTE–ELTE (Hungarian Academy of Sciences—University of Szeged—Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest) History of Globalization Research Group, which was established four years ago. Our joint efforts have given important impetus to my research: I appreciate the valuable comments of Katalin Baráth, Péter Bencsik, Zsombor Bódy, Melinda Kalmár, Márkus Keller, Réka Krizmanics, and Márton Simonkay when discussing the manuscript. I am also grateful for the support of several institutions, such as the Imre Kertész Kolleg Jena and the Leibniz Institute for East and Southeast European Studies (IOS) in Regensburg, where I was able to conduct research and to make good use of the feedback I had received on my presentations. I would also like to thank the anonymous referees for their useful comments as well as Mária Horváthné Szélpál and Attila Török, whose professional work was a great help in preparing the manuscript.

Szeged, Hungary — Béla Tomka
October 2024

Introduction

Several studies on globalization have demonstrated that the countries of East Central Europe maintain extensive transnational relations. According to the KOF Globalisation Index of the Swiss Economic Institute, the most widely used indicator in the field to measure the economic, social, cultural, and political dimensions of globalization, the Czech Republic ranks 13th and Hungary 17th among the most globalized countries in the world, with other countries in the region following them closely.[1] While smaller countries are usually more thoroughly globalized than larger ones, and the ranking may also be nuanced by several other considerations, the process of globalization as seen in East Central Europe in recent decades is undoubtedly remarkable for a number of reasons. In particular, for many observers, the level of globalization attained by the societies of the region increased dramatically after 1989: they experienced,

[1] Savina Gygli, Florian Haelg, Niklas Potrafke, and Jan-Egbert Sturm, "The KOF Globalisation Index – Revisited," *Review of International Organizations* 14, no. 3 (2019): 543–574.; for similar results, see Steven A. Altman and Caroline R. Bastian, *DHL Global Connectedness Index 2020: The State of Globalization in a Distancing World* (Bonn: Deutsche Post DHL Group 2020), 5., 56., 84., 138.; Pim Martens and M. Raza, *An Updated Maastricht Globalisation Index* (Working Paper 08020. Maastricht: ICIS, 2008); Lukas Figge and Pim Martens, "Globalisation Continues: The Maastricht Globalisation Index Revisited and Updated." *Globalizations* 11, no. 6 (2014): 875–893.

according to some studies, the fastest rate of globalization in the world.[2] Consequently, they are now more closely connected to the outside world than any other country at a comparable level of economic development. Furthermore, the regime changes and post-communist transformation of the East Central European countries coincided with the acceleration of globalization and the onset of what is also known as hyperglobalization.[3] Indeed, the active participation of these countries in hyperglobalization arguably had profound consequences for their own social and economic transformation after 1989 as well.[4]

For a long period of time, much of the research literature reflected a consensus that the region had been relatively isolated during the state socialist era with weak and rather lopsided links to most of the world; therefore its involvement in the globalization process, which had already advanced considerably in the period after 1945, was rather restricted.[5] Over the past one and a half decades, however, a number of studies have sought to reinterpret the globalization of state socialist East Central Europe, and, more broadly, Eastern Europe.[6] These revisionist works

[2] Andreas Sachs, Claudia Funke, Philipp Kreuzer, and Johann Weiss, *Globalization Report 2020: Who Benefits the Most from Globalization?* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2020).

[3] Dani Rodrik, *The Globalization Paradox: Democracy and the Future of the World Economy* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2011).

[4] For the transformation, see Philipp Ther, *Die neue Ordnung auf dem alten Kontinent. Eine Geschichte des neoliberalen Europa* (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2014). For the updated English version, see Philipp Ther, *Europe since 1989: A History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016).

[5] In what follows, we generally use the adjective 'state socialist' to describe the post-World War II countries and societies of Eastern Europe and East Central Europe. However, we also use the terms 'socialist' and 'communist' when the context so requires, or when those are the terms that appear in the literature cited. For a classical interpretation of the state socialist systems of Eastern Europe, see János Kornai, *Economics of Shortage* (Amsterdam and New York: North Holland, 1980); János Kornai, *The Socialist System: The Political Economy of Communism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

[6] For the most important examples, see Besnik Pula, *Globalization under and after Socialism: The Evolution of Transnational Capital in Central and Eastern Europe* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2018); James Mark, Bogdan C. Iacob, Tobias Rupprecht, and Ljubica Spaskovska, *1989: A Global History of Eastern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019); James Mark, Artemy M. Kalinovsky, Steffi Mahrung, eds., *Alternative Globalizations: Eastern Europe and the Postcolonial World* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 2020); James Mark and Paul Betts, eds., *Socialism Goes*

have argued that during its state socialist era, the region had indeed undergone a process of globalization particular to it. As a result, it had become much more globalized than previously assumed by mainstream historical and social science scholarship.[7] All this has further important consequences. For example, the idea that regime changes played a key role in the rapid globalization process of Eastern Europe and East Central Europe at the turn of the millennium has been called into question. It has been suggested that the state socialist period 'paved the way' for later globalization. With much of the research in recent years pointing in this direction, it is no exaggeration to say that a new narrative is emerging about the globalization of the European state socialist countries—one that clearly distinguishes itself from earlier approaches.[8]

As its title indicates, this book aims to explore how the East Central European state socialist countries fit in the overall globalization trend. The new interpretations indicated above are taken as the starting point, assessing whether they provide a more plausible assessment of the region's post-World War II globalization process than previous ones. Meanwhile, the study focuses on the practices of three countries in the region: Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. While this limited geographic scope reduces the representativeness of the results, it also allows us to look at selected areas of globalization within this group of countries in more depth. The social and economic aspects are prominently included in the analysis, as recent studies of the history of state socialist globalization

Global: the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in the Age of Decolonization (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022).

[7] In the historiography of the Cold War, the term 'revisionism' is commonly used to denote a view that, broadly speaking, traced the origin of the Cold War to American economic and political expansionism. It therefore serves to emphasize that we use the term in a different sense, applying it exclusively to the newer trend in the interpretation of state socialist globalization that will be described in detail below.

[8] Further relevant works: Ulf Engel, Frank Hadler, and Matthias Middell, eds., *1989 in a Global Perspective* (Leipzig: Leipzig University Press, 2015); George Lawson, Chris Armbruster, and Michael Cox, eds., *The Global 1989: Continuity and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Anna Calori, Anne-Kristin Hartmetz, Bence Kocsev, and Jan Zofka, eds., *Between East and South: Spaces of Interaction in the Globalizing Economy of the Cold War* (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2019); James Mark and Tobias Rupprecht, "The Socialist World in Global History: From Absentee to Victim to Co-Producer," in *The Practice of Global History: European Perspectives,* ed. Matthias Middell (London: Bloomsbury, 2019), 81–113.

have often neglected these dimensions by focusing primarily on politics and some relatively narrow aspects of culture. Particular attention is given to exploring the continuities and discontinuities in the East Central European globalization process, as this is a key issue not only in establishing the reliability of the new research findings, but also in understanding the role and significance of globalization in the state socialist societies. This obviously requires a long-term perspective; therefore, the study deals not only with the decades prior to 1989, but also with the developments thereafter. Both quantitative evidence and qualitative evidence are considered, and the discussion is informed by a comparative perspective: both East-East and East-West comparisons are pursued.

The book is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 reports the recent developments of research on the history of globalization in post-war East Central Europe and deconstructs the arguments put forward by what can arguably be regarded a revisionist approach to state socialist globalization. Chapter 2 considers four major aspects of globalization in the region: trade, capital movement, information flows, and the movement of people, which also constitute the basis for the assessment of the soundness of the new interpretations. Chapter 3 discusses the relevance of certain key concepts that compete when interpreting various facets of state socialist globalization. A separate section, Chapter 4, is dedicated to the significance of the year 1989 in the globalization of the region, as this is rightly one of the central issues in the related debates. Finally, Chapter 5 provides conclusions and a summary of the results.

Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

CHAPTER 1

Trends in Research on State Socialist Globalization: The Old and the New Mainstream

Abstract This chapter reviews recent developments of research on the history of globalization in post-war East Central Europe, and more broadly in Eastern Europe, and deconstructs the arguments presented in the revisionist perspective on state socialist globalization. Several influential works have undertaken a thorough revision of conventional approaches to the globalization of European state socialist countries. It is contended that the region became much more globalized in the three or four decades following World War II than previously thought. This new understanding highlights distinctive structural and temporal patterns of globalization within the region. In particular, the globalization of this region was shaped by its relations with the Global South, as the expansion of East-South links largely offset the deficits in their relations with the Western world. Furthermore, the year 1989 assumes a new role in the globalization process; several authors explicitly refute the notion that the regime changes accelerated the region's globalization, arguing instead that these changes only altered the nature of the region's globalization.

Keywords Globalization · Eastern Europe · East Central Europe · State socialism · Post-war era · Historiography · Global South

For a long time, mainstream research on the history of East Central European state socialist countries emphasized the region's isolation from

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the world economy.[1] These works argued that such isolation had been partly intentional and partly unintentional, an inherent consequence of a centrally planned economic system that treated the uncontrolled outside world as a source of uncertainty and trouble.[2] Full autarky was not pursued or achieved, but economic independence was an important goal especially in the 1950s, with similar efforts also commonly seen later in the region.[3] The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON) aimed to transcend national frameworks and promote self-sufficiency throughout the Eastern Bloc, but its policy met with mixed results. Since the member countries often resisted the idea and their centrally controlled economies were too inflexible to facilitate cooperation, the actual COMECON projects launched to achieve self-sufficiency were also plagued by low efficiency.[4] The isolation of the state socialist countries was exacerbated by Cold War politics; international trade was hampered in some areas by the political and economic interventions of the capitalist countries, especially the United States of America. The most notable example of such steps was in 1949 when the United States and 14 other countries established the Coordinating Committee on Multilateral Export

[1] André Steiner, "The Globalisation Process and the Eastern Bloc Countries in the 1970s and 1980s," *European Review of History* 21, no. 2 (2014): 165–181.

[2] Tomasz Mickiewicz, *Economics of Institutional Change: Central and Eastern Europe Revisited* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 20.

[3] Ivan T. Berend, *Central and Eastern Europe 1944–1993. Detour from the Periphery to the Periphery* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 82; Adam Broner, "The Degree of Autarky in Centrally Planned Economies," *Kyklos* 29, (1976): 478–494; Josef C. Brada and Edward A. Hewett, "Autarky in Centrally Planned Economies: A Comment," *Kyklos* 31, no. 1 (February 1978): 93–96; János Kornai, *Economics of Shortage* (Amsterdam and New York: North Holland, 1980); Jozef M. van Brabant, *Bilateralism and Structural Bilateralism in Intra-CMEA Trade* (Rotterdam: Rotterdam University Press, 1973).

[4] André Steiner, "The Council of Mutual Economic Assistance—An Example of Failed Economic Integration?," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 39, Heft 2 (2013): 240–258; Jerzy Łazor and Wojciech Morawski, "Autarkic Tendencies in the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance," in *Disintegration and Integration in East-Central Europe, 1919–post-1989*, eds. Wilfried Loth and Nicolae Păun (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2014), 134–146.

Controls (CoCom). CoCom prevented the export of strategically important goods to communist countries as well as technologies that could potentially be used by their military.[5]

However, it is not only in economic terms that mainstream literature has highlighted seclusion. Curbing the inflow of ideas, information, and cultural products from Western countries has also been cited as an important feature of the state socialist regimes.[6] Restrictions on the freedom of movement have been and are still seen as emblematic of these regimes, as evidenced by the frequent references to the Iron Curtain and the Berlin Wall in scholarly studies, news articles, and even cinematic productions on the region during that period.[7]

Interpretations with other focuses, scopes, and concerns have also emerged related to the global embeddedness of state socialist Eastern Europe. These, however, have not gained as widespread acceptance as the ones outlined above, not even the world-systems theory developed by Immanuel Wallerstein, which stands out among them because of its internal coherence and academic prevalence.[8] World-systems theory focuses on the unequal distribution of resources and power in the world. It maintains that a distinct social system prevails on a global scale beyond the control of individual nation states; this is conceptualized as the global economic system. In this order, all countries are interconnected and interrelated, and any changes that occur in each country are largely due to changes in the actual world-system. However, a specific world-system is conditioned by the interactions among nation states of uneven power. Since economic relations in the world-system are politically determined, its structure is relatively stable. Even though Wallerstein did not specifically focus on socialist countries, his world-systems theory suggests that state socialist countries, in their attempts to establish alternative economic

[5] Michael Mastanduno, *Economic Containment: Cocom and the Politics of East-West Trade* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992); James K. Libbey, "CoCom, Comecon, and the Economic Cold War," *Russian History* 37, no. 2 (2010): 133–152.

[6] For an exploration of this effect in a specific area, see Sarah Marks and Mat Savelli, "Communist Europe and Transnational Psychiatry," in *Psychiatry in Communist Europe*, eds. Sarah Marks and Mat Savelli (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 1–26.

[7] Wolfgang Hofmann, "West Berlin—The Isolated City in the Twentieth Century," *Journal of Contemporary History* 4, no. 3 (1969): 77–93.

[8] Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System I: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 2011).

systems, faced opposition from the dominant capitalist 'core' countries. This pressure manifested itself through economic sanctions, trade barriers, and other forms of interference aimed at isolating, and thus, undermining socialist economies. As a result, socialist countries often found themselves marginalized and excluded from global economic networks.[9] Thus, the representatives of the world-systems theory did not question the assessment that the 'semiperipheral' position of the Eastern European state socialist countries went hand in hand with their relative political, economic, and cultural isolation from the centre.[10]

The mainstream interpretation of state socialist globalization has been challenged by a number of influential studies published in recent years. This historiographical turn has been stimulated by rapidly growing scholarly interest in the globalization of Eastern Europe and, specifically, of the East Central European state socialist countries, over the last one and a half decades.[11] Besides important surveys dealing with specific countries and particular aspects of the globalization process, scholarly research has also produced a number of comprehensive works and edited volumes on the subject. In fact, somewhat surprisingly, in many respects, the globalization of the East Central European state socialist countries prior to 1989 is a subject more thoroughly researched today than the globalization of the region since 1989.[12]

[9] Zeev Gorin, "Socialist Societies and World System Theory: A Critical Survey," *Science & Society* 49, no. 3 (1985): 332–366.

[10] For literature applying the paradigm more narrowly to the East Central European region, see Manuela Boatcă, "Semiperipheries in the World-System. Reflecting Eastern European and Latin American Experiences," *Journal of World-Systems Research* 12, no. 2 (2006): 321–346; József Böröcz, "Dual Dependency and Property Vacuum: Social Change on the State Socialist Semiperiphery," *Theory and Society* 1, no. 1 (1992): 77–104.

[11] In addition to the works already cited, also see, for example, Philip E. Muehlenbeck, *Czechoslovakia in Africa, 1945–1968* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); Philip E. Muehlenbeck and Natalia Telepneva, eds., *Warsaw Pact Intervention in the Third World: Aid and Influence in the Cold War* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2019); Łukasz Stanek, *Architecture in Global Socialism: Eastern Europe, West Africa, and the Middle East in the Cold War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020); Theodora Dragostinova, *The Cold War from the Margins. A Small Socialist State on the Global Cultural Scene* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2021); Małgorzata Mazurek, "Polish Economists in Nehru's India: Making Science for the Third World in an Era of De-Stalinization and Decolonization," *Slavic Review* 77, no. 3 (2018): 588–610.

[12] For comprehensive studies focusing mainly on the economic aspects of globalization in East Central Europe in the post-1989 period, see Jan Drahokoupil, *Globalization and*

Such heightened attention is certainly justified in that the earlier interpretations, which emphasized the isolation of these regimes in a rather one-sided way, need to be supplemented and refined. At the same time, this engagement with state socialist globalization and the shifting interpretations can also be traced back to subjective factors, that is, the preferences of the researchers and the internal development of the field; interest in East Central European history has clearly declined in international scholarship since the turn of the millennium, while global history and the history of globalization have become more frequently researched worldwide. Consequently, for experts on the history of the region, studying the various forms in which globalization has manifested itself in East Central Europe offers an opportunity to align themselves with a current and important direction of academic research and to counteract, to some degree at least, the above-mentioned negative trend regarding the treatment of the East Central European region.

Obviously, the literature on the subject is diverse, even if we consider only the works published in the last few years. Thus, it is not possible to give a comprehensive overview of all the recent research results; instead, some of the key findings and trends in related research are considered here. Such an approach is facilitated by the fact that many of the publications on the subject in recent years, while they have differed in the details, have taken up similar positions on the globalization of Eastern Europe. They have explicitly sought a critical re-examination and reinterpretation of the former mainstream narrative on the globalization of state socialist Eastern Europe. Since these new approaches and interpretations have become widely accepted within the scholarly community, they can now be considered dominant in this branch of research. Considering the significant body of research that can be regarded as revisionist in the

the State in Central and Eastern Europe: The Politics of Foreign Direct Investment (London and New York: Routledge, 2009); Hilary Appel, *Tax Politics in Eastern Europe: Globalization, Regional Integration, and the Democratic Compromise* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011); Tadeusz Kowalski, *Globalization and Transformation in Central European Countries: The Case of Poland* (Poznan: Poznan University of Economics, 2013); Petr Pavlínek, "Foreign Direct Investment and the Development of the Automotive Industry in Central and Eastern Europe," in *Dependent Growth: Foreign Investment and the Development of the Automotive Industry in East-Central Europe*, ed. Petr Pavlínek (Cham: Springer, 2012), 1–46; Jan Hagemejer and Jakub Mućk, *Unraveling the Economic Performance of the CEEC Countries: The Role of Exports and Global Value Chains.* NBP Working Paper No. 283 (Warszawa: Narodowy Bank Polski, 2018).

above sense, one might argue that a new historical canon is emerging on the globalization of post-war Eastern Europe.[13]

Recent research offers remarkable new interpretations concerning the globalization in Eastern Europe between 1945 and 1989, including East Central Europe, in the following areas:

a. the dynamics of the globalization process in the region;
b. the structural patterns of globalization, and, in particular, the importance of the Global South concerning the international connections of the European state socialist countries;
c. the historical continuities and divides in the globalization process, and in particular the significance of the year 1989—that is, the regime changes—in this regard throughout the region and beyond.

In what follows, these results will be discussed in the context of the traditional mainstream interpretations with a focus on East Central Europe.[14]

[13] Further relevant works: James Mark and Tobias Rupprecht, "The Socialist World in Global History: From Absentee to Victim to Co-Producer," in *The Practice of Global History: European Perspectives*, ed. Matthias Middell (London: Bloomsbury, 2019), 81–113; Anna Calori, Anne-Kristin Hartmetz, Bence Kocsev, and Jan Zofka, eds., *Between East and South: Spaces of Interaction in the Globalizing Economy of the Cold War* (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2019); Ulf Engel, Frank Hadler, and Matthias Middell, eds., *1989 in a Global Perspective* (Leipzig: Leipzig University Press, 2015); George Lawson, Chris Armbruster, and Michael Cox, eds., *The Global 1989: Continuity and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Kowalski, *Globalization and Transformation in Central European Countries*; Pavlínek, "Foreign Direct Investment and the Development of the Automotive Industry in Central and Eastern Europe," 1–46; Hagemejer and Mućk, *Unraveling the Economic Performance of the CEEC Countries*.

[14] Two comments should be made on the use of regional terminology throughout this book. (a) The term 'East Central Europe' can obviously be interpreted more broadly than consisting only of the three countries—and, after the regime changes, the four countries—included in our research. The term is therefore not intended to imply an exclusion of other countries from the region so referred to. (b) During the period under discussion, East Central Europe was part of the wider region of Eastern Europe in many aspects of its political and socio-economic system. Thus, we use the term Eastern Europe in its broader sense, including East Central Europe, but also the Soviet Union.

1.1 Dynamics of the Globalization Process

In addition to emphasizing the closed nature of the state socialist regimes of East Central Europe, the narrative on the history of the region has treated their transformation as an issue of key importance. Often, this transformation is characterized as gradual but sometimes it is seen as abrupt. It also tends to make a clear distinction between the initial, Stalinist phase of the regimes and the period that followed. The Stalinist era saw the rapid establishment of a repressive political system and the formation of a centrally controlled economic model, which then retained many of its essential features throughout the following decades, but which nevertheless eroded and transformed over time. A multifaceted description of the latter process can be found in the highly acclaimed work of János Kornai, who describes the classical socialist system as well as the reforms and liberalization it underwent—in effect, deviating from its original premises.[15] Meanwhile, this change never followed a linear path, and it was not uniform across East Central Europe. In Czechoslovakia, a clear and lasting reversal of reforms occurred after 1968, while in Hungary there were only minor interruptions in the erosion of the centrally controlled economy and in its reform process from the late 1960s onwards. Poland stands out for its frequent changes of direction.

Much of the earlier literature also portrays the dynamics of the transnational relations of the East Central European state socialist regimes in a rather similar fashion. These countries isolated themselves from the outside world in the early 1950s, not only in economic terms but also in various areas of life, which included restrictions on the freedom of movement, on the exchange of cultural goods, and on many other aspects of culture and society. The closure was not uniform, however. For example, it was more pronounced in the area of travel: initially, citizens were not allowed to travel freely even to neighbouring socialist countries. Strong selectivity also appeared in terms of cultural exchange, with the import of Western films and books being prohibited, while the dissemination of cultural goods from other socialist countries—and especially from the Soviet Union—was supported by cultural policy.[16]

[15] János Kornai, *The Socialist System: The Political Economy of Communism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

[16] Ivan T. Berend, *From the Soviet Bloc to the European Union: The Economic and Social Transformation of Central and Eastern Europe Since 1973* (Cambridge: Cambridge

From the mid- to late 1950s, however, the regimes under study started to open up. While the trend was by no means uninterrupted, it brought about major changes over the next three decades. To continue with the previous example, citizens of the East Central European countries in the 1980s were able to travel much more freely and had access to more information and cultural products from the West than in the early period of state socialism.

In recent years, a significant body of literature on globalization in Eastern Europe, and specifically in East Central Europe, has sought to comprehensively revise the picture thus established. What emerges from these studies is that the globalization of the East Central European region after 1945 was not only much more intensive than had been widely assumed, but that its temporal evolution had also followed a particular pattern.[17]

Johanna Bockman claims that state socialist countries engaged in a more radically globalizing project than their Western counterparts. While capitalist globalization, Bockman argues, reinforced hierarchical power relations between the centre and the periphery and—above all, under the banner of free trade—strived to maintain the economic relations of the former colonial system, the proponents of East-South rapprochement sought to create a new type of relationship. The latter also sought, as the reasoning goes, to make international relations more global than the old metropole-colony relations.[18] The author reviews plans drafted by experts and politicians as well as contemporary discourse, without elaborating on the practical realization of the new type of global relations. This approach is quite prevalent in the research literature, as is the idea that the East-South relations were unique because they were largely based

University Press, 2009), 6–49; Angela Romano, "Conclusive Remarks: Tourism Across a Porous Curtain," in *Tourism and Travel During the Cold War: Negotiating Tourist Experiences Across the Iron Curtain*, eds. Sune Bechmann Pedersen and Christian Noack (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2019), 190–206.

[17] For earlier works adopting a similar approach, see Oscar Sanchez-Sibony, *Red Globalization: The Political Economy of the Soviet Cold War from Stalin to Khrushchev* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). For the Soviets' rediscovery of the Third World after 1955, see Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

[18] Johanna Bockman, "Socialist Globalization Against Capitalist Neocolonialism: The Economic Ideas Behind the New International Economic Order," *Humanity* 6, no. 1 (2015): 109–128.

on solidarity instead of economic and other interests.[19] Or, as one study suggests, "the main distinctive feature of socialist globalization" was that "while trade and outsourcing of economic projects were driven by questions of profitability, the way outsourcing and assistance were conducted was equally driven by principles of solidarity and mutual assistance."[20] It is symptomatic of the revisionist ambitions that the conceptualization of the state socialist era as a period of isolation and immobility is dismissed as "a product of Cold War propaganda"[21] and, accordingly, it is claimed that geographical "mobility was in fact key to the realization of socialist international ideology and to fostering the belief that global socialism offered the most desirable path to development and prosperity."[22]

Standing out from the new research trend, a collection of studies entitled *Alternative Globalizations* interprets the process unfolding in the region as one of several globalization processes, and—as its very title already indicates—nothing less than as an alternative to the Western-led process of globalization.[23] As the editors of the volume suggest, "[t]he idea of Western capitalism as the only engine of globalization bequeathed a distorted view of socialist and postcolonial states as inward looking, isolated, and cut off from global trends until the capitalist takeover in the

[19] Kristen Rogheh Ghodsee, *Second World, Second Sex: Socialist Women's Activism and Global Solidarity During the Cold War* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2019), 242–243.

[20] Anna Calori, Anne-Kristin Hartmetz, Bence Kocsev, and Jan Zofka, "Alternative Globalization? Spaces of Economic Interaction Between the »Socialist Camp« and the »Global South«," in *Between East and South: Spaces of Interaction in the Globalizing Economy of the Cold War*, eds. Anna Calori, Anne-Kristin Hartmetz, Bence Kocsev, and Jan Zofka (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2019), 16.

[21] Alena Alamgir, "Mobility: Education and Labour," in *Socialism Goes Global: The Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in the Age of Decolonization*, eds. James Mark and Paul Betts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022), 293.

[22] Christina Schwenkel, "Rethinking Asian Mobilities: Socialist Migration and Post-socialist Repatriation of Vietnamese Contract Workers in East Germany," *Critical Asian Studies* 46, no. 2 (2014): 236; for an earlier account, see Susan Bayly, "Vietnamese Intellectuals in Revolutionary and Postcolonial Times," *Critique of Anthropology* 24, no. 3 (2004): 336.

[23] James Mark, Artemy M. Kalinovsky, and Steffi Mahrung, eds., *Alternative Globalizations: Eastern Europe and the Postcolonial World* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 2020).

1980s and 1990s."[24] The volume also leaves no doubt that the international embeddedness of the region was the result of a conscious policy of the Soviet Union and other socialist states to this end, and that it reached a high level: "The attempt to launch an alternative globalization project was revived more than a decade after the Second World War. […] The result was that from the 1950s, a whole set of connections, interactions, trade links, and routes of circulation for ideas and people rapidly came into being. This new globalization should correctly be seen as a *project* of the USSR and other socialist states", even if it was not shaped by a single actor.[25] In fact, in another major study the socialist world emerges as an important co-producer of contemporary globalization: "Soviet and East European planning in particular can be considered one of the main globalizing forces of the mid- to late twentieth century that proved attractive to decolonizing states in the Global South looking to build their own economic sovereignty in the late 1950s and 1960s."[26] Several other recent publications also present a similar interpretation of Eastern European and East Central European globalization in the state socialist era, with the topos of 'alternative globalization' repeatedly surfacing,[27] but in the volume cited above, the authors elaborate on this concept more thoroughly than ever before; accordingly, it plays an important role in understanding—and, in fact, reinterpreting—the globalization of state socialist Eastern Europe.

[24] James Mark, Artemy M. Kalinovsky, and Steffi Mahrung, "Introduction," in *Alternative Globalizations: Eastern Europe and the Postcolonial World*, eds. James Mark, Artemy M. Kalinovsky, and Steffi Mahrung (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 2020), 2. For a similar opinion, see James Mark, Bogdan C. Iacob, Tobias Rupprecht, and Ljubica Spaskovska, *1989: A Global History of Eastern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 7.

[25] Mark, Kalinovsky, and Mahrung, "Introduction," 6. For a similar argumentation on the globalization of the Soviet Union, see Sanchez-Sibony, *Red Globalization*, 247–253.

[26] Mark and Rupprecht, "The Socialist World in Global History," 88.

[27] Calori, Hartmetz, Kocsev, and Zofka, "Alternative Globalization?," 1–31; James Mark, "The End of Alternative Spaces of Globalization? Transformations from the 1980s to the 2010s," in *Between East and South*, 217–229; Katja Castryck-Naumann, "Introduction: Moving from Transnational to Transregional Connections? East-Central Europe in Global Contexts," in *Transregional Connections in the History of East-Central Europe*, ed. Katja Castryck-Naumann (Berlin–Boston: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2021), 1–34. Osterhammel and Petersson also identify a 'bifurcation' of globalization; on this, see Jürgen Osterhammel and Niels P. Petersson, *Globalization: A Short History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 113.

While a number of studies postulate an intensive globalization taking place in the state socialist countries, the single most comprehensive collective work on the subject published to date also argues that globalization in East Central Europe followed a unique timeline. Much of the globalization literature agrees that the 1970s and 1980s saw the start of a very powerful new wave of globalization in the Western world and beyond, but James Mark and Paul Bett maintain that a diverging time pattern prevailed in Eastern Europe. As they write, "… the last decades of the Cold War in fact saw the de-globalization of the region and a retreat from the claims to leadership on the global stage."[28] The authors argue that this was primarily caused by a change in the relationship of the Eastern European countries with the Third World. While these relations experienced dynamic growth from the mid-1950s onwards, and the alternative globalization of the state socialist countries was a realistic and feasible aspiration for a large part of the political and cultural elites of the postcolonial world, by the 1970s and 1980s this policy had fizzled out. The fading commitments did not necessarily imply a decline in the volume of trade or other economic connections, but, as James Mark puts it elsewhere, "the values that underpinned these exchanges were no longer sustained by a belief in an alternative modernity".[29] This can primarily be traced back to the easing of East–West tensions as a result of which "alternative global visions were hollowed out from within" in Eastern Europe.[30] Other recent publications have also put forward—in a less elaborate form—the idea that in the last decade or two of the state socialist regimes, the globalization of East Central Europe lost its dynamism.[31]

[28] James Mark and Paul Betts, "Introduction," in *Socialism Goes Global: The Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in the Age of Decolonization*, 22.

[29] Mark, "The End of Alternative Spaces of Globalization?" 217. For a similar argumentation with a narrower focus on Hungary, see James Mark and Péter Apor, "Socialism Goes Global: Decolonization and the Making of a New Culture of Internationalism in Socialist Hungary, 1956–1989," *Journal of Modern History* 87, no. 4 (2015): 852–891.

[30] Mark, Iacob, Rupprecht, and Spaskovska, *1989: A Global History of Eastern Europe*, 9.

[31] Muehlenbeck, *Czechoslovakia in Africa, 1945–1968.*

1.2 Structural Patterns of Change

For a long time, mainstream interpretations of globalization concerning the second half of the twentieth century have taken as a starting point that the main actors determining the process of globalization were the United States and Western Europe, gradually joined by Japan and other emerging Asian countries, with other regions around the world being involved mainly vicariously through these central actors.[32] The decades following World War II are frequently referred to as 'American Globalism',[33] and the growth of global economic interconnections established by several Western European countries, sometimes even more dynamic than those of the United States, has also received much attention.[34] In fact, with few exceptions, the new technologies that helped increase global connectivity, such as in the field of communications, originated in the United States and Western Europe.[35] It was also these regions that were the most active in exporting capital, which boosted the diffusion of new technologies across continents.[36] After World War II, the United States and the Western European countries created an entire system of international organizations, often with a global reach.[37] They were the regions attracting the most foreign visitors; they were also the main destinations

[32] David Held and Anthony McGrew, eds., *The Global Transformations Reader: An Introduction to the Globalization Debate* (Bristol: Polity, 2002); Jan Aart Scholte, *Globalization: A Critical Introduction* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 101–120; George Ritzer and Paul Dean, *Globalization: A Basic Text* (Chichester: Wiley, 2015).

[33] Osterhammel and Petersson, *Globalization: A Short History*, 107–11.

[34] Robbie Robertson, *The Three Waves of Globalization: A History of Developing Global Consciousness* (London and New York: Zen Books, 2004), 171.

[35] Scholte, *Globalization*, 101–104.

[36] Maurice Obstfeld and Alan M. Taylor, "Globalization and Capital Markets," in Michael Bordo, Alan M. Taylor, and Jeffrey G. Williamson, *Globalization in Historical Perspective* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 141–145.

[37] Madeleine Herren, *Geschichte der internationalen Organisation. Eine Globalgeschichte der internationalen Ordnung* (Darmstadt: WBG, 2009), 15–32; Bob Reinalda, *Routledge History of International Organizations: From 1815 to the Present Day* (London: Routledge, 2009), 347–583; also see Akira Iriye, *Global Community: The Role of International Organizations in the Making of the Contemporary World* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002), 37–74; Sandrine Kott, "Cold War internationalism," in *Internationalisms: A Twentieth-Century History*, eds. Glenda Sluga and Patricia Clavin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 340–363.

for international migration. The United States also had a major impact on the worldwide spread of consumerism and popular culture.[38]

Research on the globalization of specific countries and regions of the world has therefore focused primarily on the intensity of their links with the United States and with Western Europe. While this approach may lead to considerable simplifications, it is undeniable in the light of the above that the role these regions played in the progress of globalization during the period was paramount. The relations any other country or group of countries developed—or failed to develop—with these regions were indeed a key determinant of their globalization.

In contrast, most recent research projects dedicated to the globalization of Eastern Europe—including the East Central European state socialist countries—have adopted a different focus. They pay particular attention to the relations between the Second and the Third World, or, to put it differently, between the Eastern Bloc and the Global South. As part of these efforts, the role of the Eastern European state socialist countries in decolonization has become a frequent area of research.[39] Other studies discuss these relations in the context of the Cold War.[40]

[38] Victoria de Grazia, *Irresistible Empire: America's Advance Through Twentieth-Century Europe* (Cambridge, MA and London: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005).

[39] Maud Anne Bracke and James Mark, "Between Decolonisation and the Cold War: Transnational Activism and Its Limits in Europe, 1950s–1990s," *Journal of Contemporary History* 50, no. 3 (2015): 403–417; James Mark, Péter Apor, Radina Vučetić, and Piotr Osęka, "'We Are with You Vietnam': Transnational Solidarities in Socialist Hungary, Poland and Yugoslavia," *Journal of Contemporary History* 50, no. 3 (2015): 439–464; Mark and Apor, "Socialism Goes Global," 852–891; Anne Gorsuch, "'Cuba, My Love': The Romance of Revolutionary Cuba in the Soviet Sixties," *American Historical Review* 120 (2015): 462–496; Tobias Rupprecht, *Soviet Internationalism After Stalin. Encounters Between the USSR and Latin America During the Cold War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Andreas Hilger, "Communism, Decolonization and the Third World," in *Cambridge History of Communism. Volume 2: The Socialist Camp and World Power 1941–1960s*, eds. N. Naimark, S. Pons, and S. Quinn-Judge (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017); James Mark and Quinn Slobodian, "Eastern Europe in the Global History of Decolonization," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Ends of Empire*, eds. Martin Thomas and Andrew S. Thompson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 351–72; Bogdan C. Iacob, "Malariology and decolonization: Eastern European Experts from the League of Nations to the World Health Organization," *Journal of Global History* 17 no. 2 (2022): 233–253.

[40] Mark Philip Bradley, "Decolonization, the Global South, and the Cold War, 1919–1962," in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, eds. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 464–485; Nicholas Rutter, "Look Left, Drive Right: Internationalisms at the 1968 World Youth Festival," in *The Socialist*

Many of them take an approach relying on case studies.[41] These contributions demonstrate the diversity of the East-South relations and many of them argue, either directly or implicitly, for their crucial importance. For several authors, the globalization of the European state socialist countries was based first and foremost on the expansion of their relations with the Third World. As James Mark and Paul Betts write, by deepening this relationship, the socialist countries sought "to escape political, cultural and economic marginalization in a western-dominated world system".[42] When this vision floundered, it meant for them a retreat from the global stage. The already cited concept of 'alternative globalization' is also based primarily on the idea that the European state socialist countries were able to compensate for the deficiencies of their relations with the Western world by establishing relations with the postcolonial world.[43] Similar arguments are found in other studies that demonstrate the significant progress of state socialist globalization by depicting the relations the

Sixties: Crossing Borders in the Second World, eds. Anne E. Gorsuch and Diane Koenker (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), 193–212; Sara Lorenzini, "Comecon and the South in the Years of Détente: A Study on East-South Economic Relations," *European Review of History/Revue européenne d'histoire* 21, no. 2 (2014): 183–199; Klaus Storkmann, *Geheime Solidarität: Militärbeziehungen und Militärhilfen der DDR in die "Dritte Welt"* (Berlin: Christoph Links, 2012); Young-Sun Hong, "Through a Glass Darkly: East German Assistance to North Korea and Alternative Narratives of the Cold War," in *Comrades of Color: East Germany in the Cold War World*, ed. Quinn Slobodian (New York: Berghahn Books, 2017), 43–72; Eric Burton, Anne Dietrich, Immanuel Harisch, and Marcia Schenck, eds., *Navigating Socialist Encounters: Moorings and (Dis)Entanglements Between Africa and East Germany During the Cold War* (Munich: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2021); László Szabolcs, "We Understand Each Other: Writers from Eastern Europe and the Global South at the International Writing Program (1970s)," in *The Cultural Cold War and the Global South: Sites of Contest and Communitas*, eds. Kerry Bystrom, Monica Popescu, and Katherine Zien (London and New York: Routledge, 2023), 92–108.

[41] For case studies, see, Quinn Slobodian, ed., *Comrades of Color: East Germany in the Cold War World* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2015); Patryk Babiracki and Austin Jersild, eds., *Socialist Internationalism in the Cold War: Exploring the Second World* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016) [Thematic issue "State Socialist Experts in Transnational Perspective," *East Central Europe* 45, no. 2–3 (2018)]; Burton, Dietrich, Harrisch, and Schenck, eds. *Navigating Socialist Encounters*; Kristin Roth-Ey, ed., *Socialist Internationalism and the Gritty Politics of the Particular: Second-Third World Spaces in the Cold War* (London: Bloomsbury, 2023).

[42] Mark and Betts, "Introduction," 10.

[43] Mark, Kalinovsky, and Marung, "Introduction," 1–31.

Eastern Bloc established with the Third World.[44] This interpretation also fits in with the emerging trend in Cold War literature after the turn of the millennium, the representatives of which argue that the Cold War tensions eased in Europe with the construction of the Berlin Wall and, from the early 1960s on, the United States and the Soviet Union directed their interventionist ambitions towards the Global South.[45]

1.3 Historical Continuities and Divides

Traditionally, historical and social science literature sees the Eastern European—and, specifically, the East Central European—regime changes in the year 1989 as symbolic of the fall of communism; it is also an important historical dividing line not only in these regions, but also in Europe in general, and even in the global context.[46] Not infrequently, 1989 is even presented as the end of an era in world history: the terminal year of the 'short twentieth century'.[47]

Accordingly, until recently, works on the globalization of the East Central European region have given a prominent role to regime changes, even though hardly any studies have actually addressed the issue systematically.[48] On the one hand, the regime changes represented a breakthrough in terms of these countries' reintegration into the world economy. The new democracies left behind the inefficiently functioning COMECON, which had hindered the diversification of the region's trade and other

[44] Bockman, "Socialist Globalization against Capitalist Neocolonialism," 109–128; Max Trecker, *Red Money for the Global South: East–South Economic Relations in the Cold War* (London and New York: Routledge, 2020).

[45] On this topic, see also Westad, *The Global Cold War*.

[46] See, for example, Spencer M. Di Scala, *Twentieth Century Europe: Politics, Society, Culture* (Boston: McGrow-Hill, 2004); Robert O. Paxton and Julie Hessler, *Europe in the Twentieth Century* (Boston: Wadsworth, 2012); Jacques Rupnik, "The World After 1989 and the Exhaustion of Three Cycles," in *1989 as a Political World Event: Democracy, Europe and the New International System in the Age of Globalization*, ed. Jacques Rupnik (London and New York: Routledge, 2014), 7–24.

[47] Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914–1991* (London: Abacus, 1994).

[48] Katalin Fábián, "Introduction: Perspectives on Globalization from Central and Eastern Europe," in Katalin Fábián, ed., *Perspectives on Globalization from Central and Eastern Europe* (Oxford: JAI Press, 2007), 1–21; Ivan T. Berend, *Europe Since 1980* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 207–215.

economic connections, and hence impeded its globalization in many respects, and now opened the region up to the world market. Often implementing radical market reforms and sometimes even resorting to shock therapy, they rapidly adopted a convertible currency regime, removed restrictions on foreign trade, and created a favourable legal and economic environment for transnational corporations and foreign direct investment (FDI). While consumers in Eastern Europe used to have little or no access to such basic products as bananas and oranges, they now had, almost overnight, access to virtually the same selection of products and services—from well-designed cars to branded cosmetics—that were available to Western Europeans and Americans.[49] On the other hand, the borders opened in both directions to tourists and other visitors, but also to various media of information and cultural goods. In this way, the products of global and especially American mass culture not only reached the region unhindered, but also came to dominate in many respects.[50] However, the transformation did not bring about an immediate effective functioning of new economic institutions or a rapid economic catch-up with the leading economic powers, because, among other reasons, the process started from a very low level due to the transformational crisis that followed the regime changes.[51]

The changes in Eastern Europe were met with a response from the academic world: economists and political scientists were particularly active, and the social consequences of the regime changes also attracted considerable attention from sociologists.[52] For this branch of research, institutionalized as 'transitology', the transformation was, as

[49] Béla Tomka, *Austerities and Aspirations: A Comparative History of Growth, Consumption and Quality of Life in East Central Europe Since 1945* (Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2020), 286–288.

[50] Béla Tomka, "Consumption and Leisure in Twentieth-Century Central and Eastern Europe," in *The Routledge History Handbook of Central and Eastern Europe in the Twentieth Century, vol. 1: Challenges of Modernity*, eds. Włodzimierz Borodziej, Stanislav Holubec, and Joachim von Puttkamer (London and New York: Routledge, 2020), 385–443.

[51] János Kornai, "Transformational Recession: The Example of Hungary," in *Eastern Europe in Crisis and the Way Out*, ed. Christopher T. Saunders (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1995), 29–77.

[52] For a comprehensive discussion of the social consequences, see Kristen Ghodsee and Mitchell A. Orenstein, *Taking Stock of Shock: Social Consequences of the 1989 Revolutions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021).

the name suggests, a transition between autocracy and democracy, or between a centrally controlled economy and a market economy. In practice, however, researchers studying economic transition often regarded state socialism as an exogenous factor in the post-1989 development trajectory and, accordingly, paid little attention to it.[53] This is why the historical literature that has sought to historicize the post-regime change period has criticized transitology for its overly narrow choice of topics and research aspects.[54]

In connection with the revisionist interpretations noted above, several recent studies have also tackled the role of the regime changes in the globalization process of East Central Europe in an explicit way.[55] Perhaps the most sophisticated argument in this respect is put forward by Besnik Pula, who claims that the integration of the East Central European countries into the world economy had begun long before 1989, which he calls "socialist protoglobalization": a period in which socialist industry and Western industry began to integrate. According to Pula, the depletion of the internal reserves of the Stalinist industrialization model, the opportunities of the world economy in the 1970s, and the reform policies of the socialist countries all contributed to the adoption of different versions of an import-led growth model that heavily depended on Western financial resources and markets.[56]

[53] Nina Bandelj, "The Global Economy as Instituted Process: The Case of Central and Eastern Europe," *American Sociological Review* 74, no. 1 (2009): 128–149.

[54] Philipp Ther, *Die neue Ordnung auf dem Kontinent: Eine Geschichte des neoliberalen Europa* (Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp, 2014), 32.

[55] For a cautious questioning of the global significance of 1989, see George Lawson, "Introduction: The 'What', 'When' and 'Where' of the Global 1989," in *The Global 1989: Continuity and Change in World Politics*, eds. George Lawson, Chris Armbruster and Michael Cox (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). For similar interpretations with a focus on Germany, see Jennifer L. Allen, "Against the 1989–1990 Ending Myth," *Central European History* 52, no. 1 (2019): 125–147; Martin Sabrow, "1990: An Epochal Break in German History?" *Bulletin of the German Historical Institute* 60, Spring (2017): 31–42; for an earlier work relativizing the role of the Iron Curtain in the area of cultural exchange, see György Péteri, "Nylon Curtain—Transnational and Transsystemic Tendencies in the Cultural Life of State-Socialist Russia and East-Central Europe," *Slavonica* 10, no. 2 (2004): 113–123.

[56] In his analysis, Pula covers the following countries: Poland, Czechoslovakia and its successor states, Hungary, Slovenia, Romania, and Bulgaria. Besnik Pula, *Globalization Under and After Socialism: The Evolution of Transnational Capital in Central and Eastern Europe* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2018), 65–107.

In the 1970s, relations between East Central European companies and Western firms became more complex and, Pula argues, evolved beyond simple technology transfer and greenfield investment into more complex, long-term inter-organizational relationships, including joint ventures, production cooperation, and joint research and development. As a result, during this period, not only did trade between the socialist countries and the West expand, but transnational corporations became increasingly involved in the introduction of new technologies, production techniques, and management methods in East Central Europe. Thus, the new FDI-driven and export-oriented economic system that emerged in the region after the regime changes has its origins in the links between reform socialism and transnational corporations.[57]

Pula does not entirely deny the importance of 1989, but ascribes a much smaller role than usual to it in the progress of economic change and globalization, stressing "the importance of past organizational capacities in interpreting the region's global integration and its patterns during the immediate postsocialist period as a direct consequence of the legacy of 1970s socialist protoglobalization".[58]

James Mark and several of his collaborators go further in their work on the global significance of 1989, claiming that the regime changes did not mark a turning point in the globalization of Eastern Europe. Instead, only the frame of globalization changed in the region from that point onwards. As they write, "[t]he collapse of Communist ruled polities thus did not represent the entry of Eastern Europe into a global economy. 1989 should be understood as the culmination of an engagement with what was called an 'interdependent' world economy that Communist elites had themselves encouraged. It was also a choice about the form that such globalisation should take."[59] The Third World is again a key part of the argument: regime changes have brought Eastern Europe closer to

[57] Pula, *Globalization Under and After Socialism*, 78–83. For advocating the existence of dynamic trade and financial relations between the USSR and Western Europe during the Cold War, see Sanchez-Sibony, *Red globalization*, op cit. For an argumentation emphasizing the vital importance of Western Europe for the Soviet Union, see Jonathan Haslam, *Russia's Cold War. From the October Revolution to the Fall of the Wall* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011).

[58] Pula, *Globalization Under and After Socialism*, 114.

[59] Mark, Iacob, Rupprecht, and Spaskovska, *1989: A Global History of Eastern Europe*, 30.

the West, but relations with the Third World ended or declined sharply. Thus, they continue, 1989 was a "»de-globalising« moment" for Eastern Europe.[60] Some of the same authors elsewhere affirm this position: the impact of the regime changes was not that they facilitated globalization in the region, instead, "the fall of state socialism in 1989–91 was rather a moment that crystallized the choice over how to globalize".[61]

The interpretations presented here thus question the role of the regime changes in East Central Europe, and in the wider Eastern European region, in a novel and important respect.[62] Doubts have already been raised about the significance of the regime changes concerning various aspects, including the extent to which the goals widely accepted at the time of the collapse of state socialism, such as the establishment of the rule of law, were achieved in East Central Europe, and, in particular, in such parts of the region as Hungary. However, it is a new proposition that the regime changes did not bring about a fundamental turn in the course of the globalization of these countries, and, indeed, that 1989 can actually be interpreted as a 'de-globalizing moment'. The plausibility of this thesis will be considered in more detail in Chapter 4.

As demonstrated in this chapter, there has been a large body of recent work making sweeping generalizations about the globalization of Eastern Europe, including East Central Europe, during the state socialist period. These accounts have not systematically explored a number of important aspects, so it would certainly seem useful to continue the research by gathering further empirical evidence. Thus, the next part of this study takes a comprehensive empirical approach to the globalization of the East Central European state socialist countries, which might also constitute a basis for the assessment of the recently emerging revisionist interpretations.

[60] Mark, Iacob, Rupprecht, and Spaskovska, *1989: A Global History of Eastern Europe*, 30.

[61] Mark and Betts, "Introduction," 24.

[62] For a work putting forth a similar but somewhat less radical thesis, see Cristian Nae, "A Porous Iron Curtain: Artistic Contacts and Exchanges Across the Eastern European Bloc During the Cold War (1960–1980)," in *Art History in a Global Context: Methods, Themes, and Approaches*, eds. Ann Albritton and Gwen Farrelly (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2020), 13–26.

CHAPTER 2

Reconsidering Cross-Border Interactions: Balancing the Scales

Abstract This chapter considers four major aspects of globalization in state socialist East Central Europe, which also serve as a basis for assessing the soundness of new and older mainstream interpretations: trade, capital movements, information flows, and the movement of people. The East Central European state socialist countries achieved a relatively low level of globalization between World War II and the period of regime changes, which is evident in all the aspects surveyed. At the same time, there is no empirical evidence to support the claim that globalization in the region decreased in the two decades leading up to the regime changes. On the contrary, during the latter period, globalization advanced slowly but steadily in the East Central European countries. The gradual increase in openness was facilitated by the growing complexity of their economies, growing consumer demands, and the ongoing globalization of the world at large, as well as by rapid technological change, such as the spread of new information and communication technologies. From the 1970s onwards, the region also experienced internal divergence: the international openness of Poland and Hungary increased more significantly than that of Czechoslovakia.

Keywords Globalization · Eastern Europe · East Central Europe · State socialism · Foreign trade · FDI · Information · Telecommunication · Border regimes · Tourism · Migration

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Globalization is a multifaceted phenomenon, and, in our view, it includes three aspects in particular. These are as follows: (1) the intensification and geographical expansion of cross-border relations and flows; (2) the growing interdependence between the societies of the world; and (3) the rising social awareness of these very processes worldwide.[1] Of these, the focus is on flows here, which can be examined from several angles. Attention can be paid to their presence in different areas; hence, we can speak of economic, political, military, cultural, social, and ecological globalization. Exploring each of these areas in equal depth within the scope of a single book has inherent limitations, especially in the context of an empirical historical study such as ours. Instead, in what follows, the character and scale of state socialist globalization are explored by a survey of cross-border flows. Four main types of flow across borders are examined: goods and services, capital, information, and people. The choice of these areas is by no means arbitrary, as they are central to the literature on the subject.[2] The majority of cross-border flows can arguably be classified into the four broad categories selected for analysis.

Even though the discussion will be limited to selected areas of globalization, the dimensions we focus on substantially overlap with several aspects we do not directly address. A more substantial limitation is that globalization and internationalization cannot be sufficiently separated in the research process. Cross-border flows have different qualities: some of them only occur between neighbouring countries, others are transplanetary movements, and many fall in between. Oftentimes, interactions between different societies are phenomena of a more limited scope than transcontinental relations, wherefore, in the strict sense, they fall—if

[1] For similar definitions, see Robert J. Holton, *Making Globalization* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 14–15; Roland Robertson, *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture* (London: Sage, 1992), 8; for the concept, see Paul Jones and Manfred B. Steger, "A Genealogy of 'Globalization'—The Career of a Concept," in Paul Jones and Manfred B. Steger, *Globalization: The Career of a Concept* (London and New York: Routledge, 2015), 1–18; for further definitions, see Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), 64; Jan Aart Scholte, *Globalization: A Critical Introduction* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 59; George Ritzer, *The Globalization of Nothing 2* (London: Sage, 2007), 4; Robert O. Keohane, *Power and Governance in a Partially Globalized World* (London: Routledge, 2002), 15.

[2] Michael Bordo, Alan M. Taylor, and Jeffrey G. Williamson, *Globalization in Historical Perspective* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2003); George Ritzer and Paul Dean, *Globalization: A Basic Text* (Chichester: Wiley, 2015), 173–293; Scholte, *Globalization*, 67–75.

not exclusively—into the category of internationalization. However, the expansion of shorter-term links within a given continent tends to go hand in hand with the spread of connections across the globe, so that internationalization and globalization complement and reinforce each other. Accordingly, much of the literature considers that globalization does not only encompass truly global interactions, but also the spread of other types of international relations.[3] Therefore, not only does separating globalization from internationalization raise a host of practical research problems, it is also infeasible on conceptual grounds. In fact, it has never been achieved in the context of empirical historical studies. Despite these shortcomings, we believe that the applied approach provides an appropriate framework for research.

2.1 Foreign Trade: The Short Shadow of COMECON

A key component of the globalization process is the worldwide flow of goods and services. International trade is not only related to economic activity, but also encourages travel and facilitates the development of personal contacts across borders as well as contributing to the intensification of a range of other flows. Accordingly, when studying the globalization of a country or region, the development of foreign trade is of particular interest.[4] The more involved a country is in international trade, i.e., the greater its trade openness, the more globalized it is in economic terms. At the same time, a distinction can be drawn between de facto and de jure dimensions of trade openness.[5] De facto openness is

[3] Michael Storper, "Territories, Flows, and Hierarchies in the Global Economy," in *Spaces of Globalization*, ed. Kevin R. Cox (New York: The Guilford Press, 1997), 19–44; Philip F. Kelly, "The Geographies and Politics of Globalization," *Progress in Human Geography* 23, no. 3 (1999): 385.

[4] It features, for example, in the KOF Globalization Index as well as in the A. T. Kearney/Foreign Policy Globalization Index. See Axel Dreher, "Does Globalization Affect Growth? Evidence from a New Index of Globalization Call Made," *Applied Economics* 38, no. 10 (2006): 1091–1110; http://www.atkearney.com, accessed 20 November 2022.

[5] Claudius Gräbner, Philipp Heimberger, Jakob Kappeler, and Florian Springholz, "Understanding Economic Openness: A Review of Existing Measures," *Review of World Economics* 157, no. 1 (2021): 89. On distinguishing between the de facto and de jure aspects of globalisation, also see Savina Gygli, Florian Haelg, Niklas Potrafke, and Jan-Egbert Sturm, "The KOF Globalisation Index–Revisited," *Review of International*

usually characterized by various indicators of external trade flows, while de jure openness is influenced by the institutional basis of the external economy, in particular the legal regulation of foreign trade.

The most commonly used measure of de facto trade openness—and hence of this dimension of globalization—is the ratio of foreign trade flows, i.e., the sum of exports and imports of goods and services, to gross domestic product.[6] However, the term 'openness' can be somewhat misleading in this context, as low levels of openness do not necessarily imply high tariffs or extensive non-tariff barriers to trade, but are often the results of other factors.[7] One of the determinants is the size of the economy; small countries tend to be better integrated into the world economy than larger ones, as they can usually produce fewer types of goods and services, and thus need to import more to meet domestic demand.[8] Differences in trade openness across countries are also explained by other factors, such as their geographical distance from their potential trading partners, their trade policy preferences, and the structure of their economies, in particular the weight of place-bound services. Another important determinant is the degree of their embeddedness in global production chains, as measured trade volumes may include a significant share of re-exports and intra-firm trade by multinational firms, especially in terms of intermediary products.[9]

Organizations 14, no. 3 (2019): 543–574; Kelly, "The Geographies and Politics of Globalization," 385.

[6] Eiji Fuji, "What Does Trade Openness Measure?," *Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics* 81, no. 4 (2019): 868–888. In research literature, trade openness has a number of other names and measures as well; these include 'trade intensity' and its indicator the 'Trade Intensity Index'.

[7] Taking into account the different measures of trade openness, Pritchett distinguishes four general types: (1) the share of trade in GDP, (2) indices of tariffs and non-tariff barriers, (3) measures of the deviation of countries' actual trade pattern from the pattern predicted from a model of resource-based comparative advantage, and (4) a measure of price distortions. Lant Pritchett, "Measuring Outward Orientation in LDCs: Can It Be Done?" *Journal of Development Economics* 49, no. 2 (1996): 307–335.

[8] Sergio A. Castello and Terutomo Ozawa, *Globalization of Small Economies as a Strategic Behavior in International Business* (London: Routledge, 1999), 29–30.

[9] "OECD Trade Openness," in *OECD Science, Technology and Industry Scoreboard 2011* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2011), 176–177.

Literature contains various efforts to adjust trade openness indicators to correct for size-related distortions.[10] The main limitation of these calculations is that they are ad hoc, i.e., they do not have a sound theoretical basis. Moreover, the data for such computations are not available historically for state socialist and post-communist countries. Thus, in what follows, trade openness will be analysed in the standard manner indicated above.

The long-term data demonstrate that de facto trade openness in the East Central European state socialist countries was relatively low and changed little during the 1950s and 1960s. Their trade flows as a percentage of gross domestic product increased in the 1970s and shifted only slightly in the decade that followed.[11] By contrast, the early 1990s brought a marked turn, with the economies of the countries in the region becoming much more open, as evidenced by the contribution of exports to their GDP (Fig. 2.1).[12] Meanwhile, there were significant differences in the dynamics of change within the region. While Czechoslovakia—and its successor states, the Czech Republic and Slovakia—and Hungary showed greater openness and achieved a high degree of trade integration by the 2010s even in broader international comparison, this was less the case for Poland, which may be partly explained by size differences across the countries as suggested above. However, it is clear that for the region as a whole, the regime changes can be seen as a major turning point in terms of the degree of trade openness.

The dynamics of de jure trade openness in the region are very similar to what we have observed concerning de facto trade openness so far. This is not surprising, since legal regulation and other institutional features strongly determined the evolution of foreign trade intensity. Nevertheless, the differences between the individual East Central European countries

[10] Lant Pritchett, "Measuring Outward Orientation in LDCs: Can It Be Done?," *Journal of Development Economics* 49, no. 2 (1996): 307–335.

[11] For more on this period, see André Steiner, "The Decline of Soviet-Type Economies," in *The Cambridge History of Communism. Vol. 3: Endgames? Late Communism in Global Perspective, 1968 to the Present*, eds. Juliane Fürst, Silvio Pons, and Mark Selden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 203–223.

[12] Kiril Kossev and William Thompson, "Political and Economic Integration with the Western Economies Since 1989," in *The Economic History of Central, East and South-Europe: 1800 to the Present*, ed. Matthias Morys (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2021), 442–443.

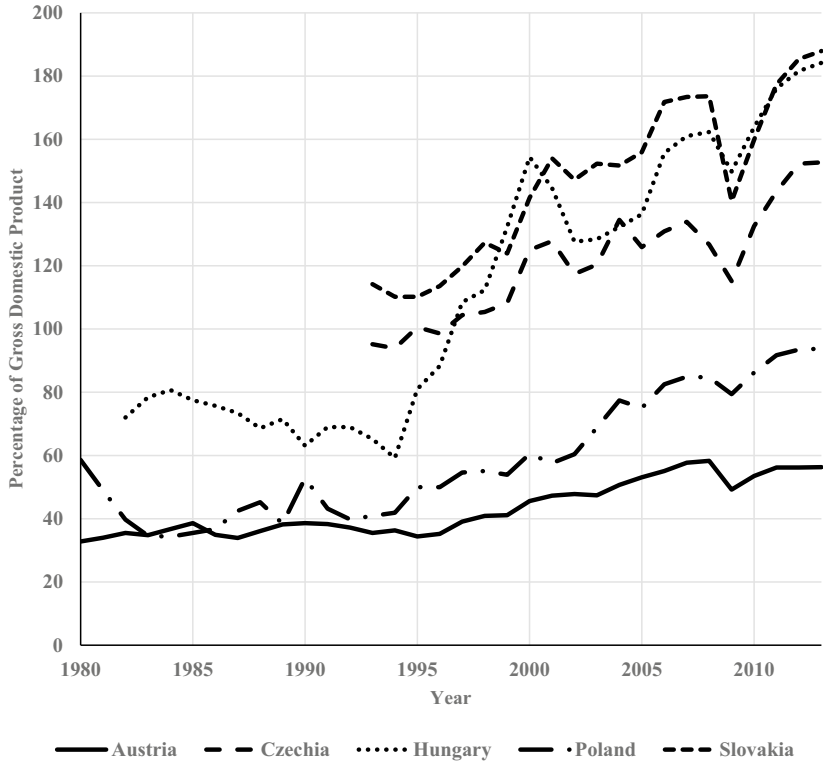

Fig. 2.1 Trade openness of East Central European countries, 1980–2013 (combined value of exports and imports of goods and services as a percentage of GDP) (*Sources* UNCTAD Stat, various volumes [the author's own calculations]; https://unctadstat.unctad.org/wds/TableViewer/tableView.aspx, accessed 22 September 2022)

were smaller in this respect than those found for de facto trade openness, in the period both before and after the regime changes.[13]

[13] Jeffrey D. Sachs and Andrew Warner, "Economic Reform and the Process of Global Integration," *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity*, no. 1 (1995): 62; Romain Wacziarg and Karen Horn Welch, "Trade Liberalization and Growth: New Evidence," *The World Bank Economic Review* 22, no. 2 (2008): 214.

The relatively moderate rates of trade openness are attributable to important systemic features of the Soviet-style economic regimes. State ownership, centrally planned economy, bureaucratic regulations, and the lack of currency convertibility were major barriers to their integration into the world economy.[14] The pursuit of self-sufficiency also featured prominently among these obstacles. An important element of central planning was the state monopoly on foreign trade, which facilitated the comprehensive implementation of various restrictions and the control of the direction of trade. This policy was fully in line with the behaviour of companies conditioned by the operational logic of centrally controlled economies.[15] As János Kornai amply illustrated, companies tended to avoid exports, as it was much easier for them to sell their products and services domestically where the economy of shortage essentially created a sellers' market. Export aversion was particularly prevalent in the case of deliveries to capitalist countries, where the quality requirements were higher, and state socialist firms did not necessarily benefit from efforts to meet them since their extra revenues were redistributed by the planning bureaucracy or other authorities.[16]

Primarily on ideological grounds, policymakers in Eastern Europe preferred and encouraged intra-COMECON trade relations in the first decades of state socialist regimes.[17] There is a consensus among researchers that the COMECON had a significant impact on the foreign trade relations of the member states. First of all, it had a strong trade diversion effect, i.e., while trade among the countries of the region increased dramatically, there was a substantial decrease in their trade with Western European and other advanced capitalist countries when

[14] Marin Lavigne, *The Economics of Transition: From Socialist Economy to Market Economy* (New York: Macmillan, 1995), 65–87; Josef C. Brada, "The Political Economy of Communist Foreign Trade Institutions and Policies," *Journal of Comparative Economics* 15, no. 2 (1991): 211–238.

[15] Federico Romero, "Socialism Between Détente and Globalisation," in *European Socialist Regimes' Fateful Engagement with the West: National Strategies in the Long 1970s*, eds. Angela Romano and Federico Romero (London: Routledge, 2021), 11–30.

[16] János Kornai, *The Socialist System: The Political Economy of Communism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 348.

[17] Franklin D. Holzman, "Comecon: A 'Trade-Destroying' Customs Union?," *Journal of Comparative Economics* 9, no. 4 (1985): 410–423.

compared to their overall foreign trade volume.[18] This in itself meant selective participation in the world economy. There is more debate on the question of whether COMECON increased the total foreign trade turnover of the member states. It has been argued that this organization had a strong trade creation potential—even if it limited trade flows to a relatively narrow group of socialist countries. However, most observers are sceptical on this point too: Franklyn D. Holzman writes of the outright 'trade-destroying' effects of socialist economic integration, although these effects diminished considerably by the 1980s.[19] Member states often found it cheaper to produce goods domestically rather than importing them from other COMECON countries because the COMECON prices were largely determined by political negotiations and not by supply and demand.[20] Research has placed even more emphasis on the fact that the centralized and bureaucratic coordination mechanisms of COMECON tended to increase the rigidity of the planned economies, thus impeding innovation and the production of high-quality products.[21]

These factors alone resulted in a low level of trade openness in state socialist East Central Europe, even if over time economic reforms—especially in Hungary and Poland—loosened the constraints and gave priority to Western exports, which in turn led to significant shifts in the geographical structure of foreign trade in these two countries as early as the 1970s.[22]

After the regime changes, there was a clear turnaround in terms of both de jure and de facto openness. The East Central European countries under consideration successfully implemented all key components of

[18] Masahiro Endoh, "Trade Creation and Trade Diversion in the EEC, the LAFTA and the CMEA, 1960–1994," *Applied Economics* 31 (1999): 207–216; Jozef M. van Brabant, *Economic Integration in Eastern Europe: A Handbook* (New York: Routledge, 1989), 376.

[19] Holzman, "Comecon: A 'Trade-Destroying' Customs Union?," 417–418.

[20] Holzman, "Comecon: A 'Trade-Destroying' Customs Union?," 411.

[21] Kornai, *The Socialist System*, 359; Steiner, "The Council of Mutual Economic Assistance—An Example of Failed Economic Integration?," 248.

[22] Elisabeth Beckmann and Jarko Fidrmuc, "Oil Price Shock and Structural Changes in CMEA Trade: Pouring Oil on Troubled Waters?," *The European Journal of Comparative Economics* 9, no. 1 (2012): 40; Pál Germuska, "Failed Eastern integration and a Partly Successful Opening Up to the West: The Economic Re-orientation of Hungary During the 1970s," *European Review of History–Revue européenne d'histoire* 21, no. 2 (2014): 271–291.

a market economy in a relatively short period of time, including currency convertibility, elimination of state monopoly on foreign trade, and reduction of barriers to international trade. COMECON was abolished, and these countries were quickly integrated into the economic institutions of the West: trade agreements within the WTO were particularly important in this respect, but they also adopted at least some of the economic policies proposed by the IMF and the World Bank.[23] With the break-up of Czechoslovakia in 1992, the year 2004 saw the accession of four new member states into the EU instead of three: the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, and Hungary. EU membership had a profound impact on their trade. The Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary had already experienced an explosion of foreign trade in the mid-1990s; after their accession, their trade openness increased dramatically. In Poland, the extent of the transformation was more limited. The dynamics and the high levels of openness reached after the turn of the millennium in the region are particularly evident when comparing the trade openness of the East Central European countries with the same indicator for Austria (Fig. 2.1).

The regime changes also brought about a complete restructuring of external trade in the four East Central European countries under review.[24] The large relative size of their foreign trade with the Eastern European countries began to decline in the 1960s, still, in the mid-1980s, on average, half of their exports went to this group of countries, compared with around a quarter that were directed to the region that later became the EU-15.[25] In the case of Poland and Hungary, this shift away from the COMECON area gained new impetus in the mid-1980s, and within just a few years of the regime changes, the structure of foreign trade underwent yet another fundamental transformation. By 1994, the share of Eastern

[23] Richard Baldwin, "The World Trade Organization and the Future of Multilateralism," *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 30, no. 1 (2016): 95–116.

[24] Bartlomiej Kaminski, Zhen Kun Wang, and Alan L. Winters, *Foreign Trade in the Transition: The International Environment and Domestic Policy* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 1996), 17; Paul Brenton and Daniel Gros, "Trade Reorientation and Recovery in Transition Economies," *Oxford Review of Economic Policy* 13, no. 2 (1997): 65–76; Daniel Gros, "From Transition to Integration: The Role of Trade and Investment," in *The Great Rebirth: Lessons from the Victory of Capitalism over Communism*, eds. Anders Åslund and Simeon Djankov (Washington, DC: Peterson Institute for International Economics, 2014), 233–250.

[25] Germuska, "Failed Eastern Integration and a Partly Successful Opening Up to the West," 281.

Table 2.1 Trade reorientation in East Central European countries, 1984–1994 (destination of exports, percentage of total exports)

Country	*Year*	*Soviet Union and successor states*	*Eastern Europe without Soviet Union*	*EU-15*	*United States*	*Other*
Poland	1984	29.3	14.0	28.9	2.2	25.6
	1994	9.3	4.5	69.2	3.4	13.6
Czechoslovakia	1984	43.4	16.6	13.0	0.4	25.6
Czech R.	1994	6.5	8.0	72.8	2.9	9.8
Slovakia	1994	7.2	1.2	83.0	4.5	4.1
Hungary	1984	30.1	12.5	22.9	2.7	31.8
	1994	15.1	10.4	60.7	4.0	9.8

Notes East Central Europe includes Poland, Czechoslovakia (or its successor states the Czech Republic and Slovakia), and Hungary; Eastern Europe includes Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, the Soviet Union and its successor states, and Yugoslavia and its successor states; unweighted mean

Sources Direction of Trade Statistics, different volumes; UN, *International Trade Statistics Yearbook*, different volumes; Daniel Piazolo, "Trade Integration Between Eastern and Western Europe: Policies Follow the Market," *Journal of Economic Integration* 12, no. 3 (1997): 262

European economies in the exports of the four East Central European countries had fallen to one-third of the previous level on average, showing a significant disparity ranging from 9% to 26%, while the share of the EU member states multiplied, ranging from 60% to 83% (Table 2.1). The importance of COMECON trade thus declined surprisingly rapidly in the region during the early 1990s.

2.2 Capital Movement: Financial Openness and Foreign Indebtedness

In addition to international trade in goods and services, another major focus of attention in the study of economic globalization is financial openness. The more affected a country is by the global flow of capital, the more globalized it can be considered. The various financial movements are linked to other dimensions of globalization in a number of ways: for example, the arrival of multinational companies in a specific country is usually accompanied by capital investment, and their activities increase

international trade and generate financial transactions along with information flows. As with trade openness, the literature distinguishes between de facto and de jure aspects of the process.[26]

Several indicators exist to measure de facto international financial integration. One of them is the Financial Openness Index, which is the ratio of foreign assets and liabilities to gross domestic product expressed as a percentage. Other relevant measures include the ones used in reference to Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in combination with financial investment.[27] These indicators are not available in the longer term for the countries covered in this study. There exist, however, data on the volume of FDI in proportion to the gross domestic product of the East Central European economies.[28] This ratio is widely used as an indicator of financial openness in related studies. From the point of view of the country at the receiving end, FDI has the advantage that it does not involve indebtedness and is less volatile than several other types of foreign investment. As capital movement in general, FDI also facilitates globalization in various ways, such as by playing an important role in the diffusion of new technologies and management know-how.[29]

Compared to trade openness, the evolution of FDI shows similar but even more pronounced trends in East Central Europe in the last third of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century. In state socialist regimes, the operation of foreign-owned enterprises was incompatible or difficult to reconcile with official ideology and the practices of a centrally controlled economy. As a result, foreign direct investment in the region was almost non-existent until the 1970s and remained extremely low until the late 1980s. The earliest data we have are for Poland: the volume of FDI was 0.01% of the country's GDP in 1975, rising to 0.2% in 1985 and 0.3% in 1989, which was still well below the relative level of FDI attracted by Central and Western European countries, such as Austria in the same

[26] Gräbner, Heimberger, Kappeler, and Springholz, "Understanding Economic Openness," 94–95, 98–100.

[27] Philipp Lane and Gian Maria Milesi-Ferretti, *International Financial Integration in the Aftermath of the Global Financial Crisis*. IMF Working Paper No. 17/115 (Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund, 2017).

[28] UNCTAD, *UNCTADstat Database by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. 2017*. http://unctadstat.unctad.org/EN/, accessed 28 October 2022.

[29] Gräbner, Heimberger, Kappeler, and Springholz, "Understanding Economic Openness," 87–120.

years. After 1989, all the East Central European countries studied made a real breakthrough in this area. Hungary led the way, with FDI leaping from 0.6% of the country's GDP in 1989 to 24.3% in 1995, and then to over 60% at the turn of the millennium.[30] The Czech Republic and Slovakia followed Hungary with a few years' delay and achieved similar relative ratios, by then well ahead of Austria. FDI in Poland showed similar dynamics, but at a lower level when expressed as a share of the country's GDP (Fig. 2.2).

The Chinn-Ito index has been widely used in the research literature to describe the legal and institutional environment determining the financial openness of a specific country, that is, to trace de jure financial openness.[31] This indicator captures the extent to which capital transactions are regulated, taking into account controls on financial and capital transactions, the existence of dual or multiple exchange rates, and requirements for transferring any export earnings obtained in foreign exchange to government agencies.[32]

The index shows strong restrictions on international financial transactions in the East Central European state socialist countries: even in the 1980s, these countries had the lowest rating on a five-point scale. However, this condition changed rapidly in the first half of the 1990s, when the regulatory environment for FDI became much more favourable in all the East Central European countries under review. The Czech Republic and Hungary led the way, with both countries reaching the highest level of the Chinn-Ito index in 2001.[33]

This picture of the very limited international financial integration of the East Central European countries is nuanced by the fact that their indebtedness to the West started to grow rapidly from the 1970s onwards.[34]

[30] The author's own calculations based on the following database: https://web.pdx.edu/~ito/Chinn-Ito_website.htm, accessed 31 October 2022.

[31] Menzie D. Chinn and Hiro Ito, "What Matters for Financial Development? Capital Controls, Institutions, and Interactions," *Journal of Development Economics* 81, no. 1 (2006): 163–192. Update in 2020: https://web.pdx.edu/~ito/Chinn-Ito_website.htm, accessed 31 October 2022.

[32] Chinn and Ito, "What Matters for Financial Development?," 169–170.

[33] KAOPEN Data Base, https://web.pdx.edu/~ito/Chinn-Ito_website.htm, accessed 31 October 2022.

[34] Stephen Kotkin, "The Kiss of Debt: The East Bloc Goes Borrowing," in *The Shock of the Global: The 1970s in Perspective*, eds. Niall Ferguson, Charles S. Maier, Erez Manela

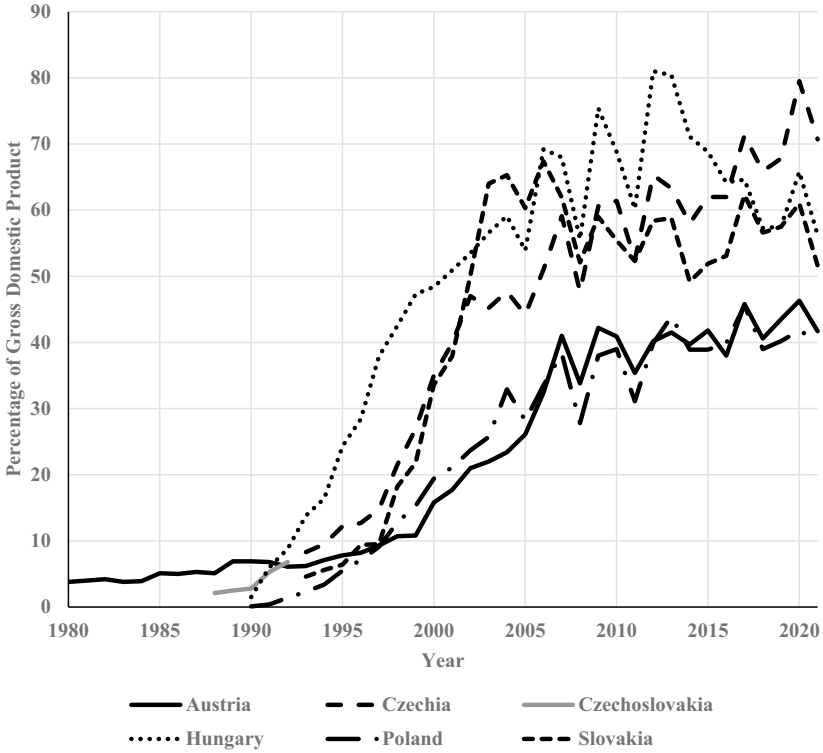

Fig. 2.2 Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) stock in East Central European countries and Austria, 1988–2020 (as a percentage of the GDP) (*Sources* UNCTAD Stat, various volumes [the author's own calculations]; The External Wealth of Nations Database, Brookings Institute, https://www.brookings.edu/research/the-external-wealth-of-nations-database/, accessed 31 October 2022)

The high level of foreign borrowing by several of the COMECON countries was mainly driven by their technological underdevelopment. While the oil crisis of 1973 accelerated technological change in Western economies, the three East Central European COMECON economies were much less able to make such progress. They sought to compensate

and Daniel J. Sargent (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011), 80–93.

for the impact of the oil price shock and the deficiencies in technological and economic innovation by borrowing from the West to finance the import of Western products. As Table 2.2 shows, in 1971 the external indebtedness in convertible currency was still small in all the countries of the region under study. In the case of Poland and Hungary, however, the level of indebtedness increased many times over by 1980, only to double again over the following ten years. Foreign borrowing also considerably advanced in Czechoslovakia from the mid-1970s, but per capita debt remained low compared to the other two countries even at the time of the regime change (Table 2.2).[35]

Relying on borrowing from the West, the COMECON countries concerned were not able to carry out the technological modernization that could have enabled them to repay the loans on their own. At the same time, Western loans undeniably enhanced the global relations of these countries by promoting East–West trade; they were partly used to import consumer goods and partly to purchase licences and advanced technologies, but also to establish productive cooperation in which the West generally provided the key components.[36] Cooperation

Table 2.2 Foreign indebtedness of East Central European countries in convertible currency, 1971–1990 (million USD, end of year)

Country	*Debt*	*Year*				
		1971	*1975*	*1980*	*1985*	*1990*
Poland	Gross	987	8388	24,128	29,300	48,500
	Net	662	7725	23,482	27,706	40,684
Czechoslovakia	Gross	325	1098	5602	3597	6732
	Net	–	305	1256	1011	1353
Hungary	Gross	1510	3929	9090	13,955	21,270
	Net	687	2034	7698	11,679	19,486

Source Sándor Richter. "Economic Integration Within COMECON and with the Western Economies." In *The Economic History of Central, East and South-Europe: 1800 to the Present*, ed. Matthias Morys (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2021), 346

[35] Sándor Richter, "Economic Integration Within COMECON and with the Western Economies," in *The Economic History of Central, East and South-Europe: 1800 to the Present*, ed. Matthias Morys (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2021), 346–347.

[36] David Lane, "Global Capitalism and the Transformation of State Socialism," *Studies in Comparative International Development* 44, no. 2 (2009): 100.

with Western firms based on the purchase of licences and under contract work acquired greater economic importance than foreign direct investment in some sectors, especially consumer goods, throughout the region from the 1960s onwards. A well-known example of this type of link in the car industry sector was the production of Polski Fiat passenger vehicles in Poland, which was based on a licence acquired from the Italian car manufacturer Fiat.[37]

2.3 Information Flow: Telecommunications and Media

The flow of information across borders is a key contributor to the much-discussed phenomenon of time and space compression, a fundamental element of globalization since the nineteenth century.[38] What is more, the relative importance of the worldwide exchange of information in the context of globalization as a whole has increased in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. There are several examples of information spreading ever more widely around the world while other types of flows stagnated or slowed down: this was the case in the 2010s, when the relative size of international trade did not grow as fast as in previous decades, or, according to some measures, it even slightly declined, while the diffusion of information accelerated on a global scale.[39]

At the same time, information flows are much more difficult to capture empirically than the other aspects of globalization covered so far, as they take place through a myriad of channels, including newspapers, books, letters, telegram service, telephony, radio, television, films, and the Internet, as well as academic conferences, student exchanges, and travel.[40]

[37] Z. Anthony Kruszewski, "Transportation in Poland: Development, Problems and Policies," in *East European Transport: Regions and Modes*, ed. Bogdan Mieczkowski (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1980), 35.

[38] Daya Kishan Thussu, *International Communication: Continuity and Change* (London: Arnold, 2000), 53–81; Thomas L. McPhail, *Global Communication: Theories, Stakeholders, and Trends* (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2010), 1–30.

[39] For more on this, see, for example, the development of the various components of the KOF Index: https://kof.ethz.ch/en/forecasts-and-indicators/indicators/kof-globalisation-index.html, accessed 10 December 2022.

[40] Hamid Mowlana, *Global Information and World Communication: New Frontiers in International Relations* (London: Sage, 1997), 23–32.

As a result, the study of the international diffusion of information can only be very selective; specific areas must be designated that are considered to be important as well as characteristic of the process as a whole. In the research literature, these proxy indicators include, for example, the volume of international mail service and air traffic, the number of international telephone calls, the volume of book exports and imports, the number of internationally protected patents, the degree of freedom of the press and, more recently, the volume of Internet traffic, or some combinations of these.[41]

Against this background, the following section of the chapter considers two main areas of information flow: telecommunications on the one hand, and the print and electronic press on the other. In both cases, the specific aspects selected are not only relevant in themselves, but, arguably, they also indicate the approximate changes in other areas of communication and media that are difficult to study or for which there are insufficient data available.

In telecommunications, information flow is explored by applying a network analysis based on the relations among the system's elements rather than the characteristics of individual cases in order to identify structures in the global telecommunications system. The positions of the East Central European state socialist countries in the global information space will be determined in terms of the frequency of communication between nations via telecommunication channels, and the study considers how the positions of these countries evolved after the regime changes. The analysis exploits international telephone call data, which have been used as an important indicator in a number of studies and composite indices measuring the level of globalization.[42] A major argument in favour of an inquiry into telephone calls is that phone calls were a fundamental form of cross-border communication in the decades before the regime changes in East Central Europe and beyond, and remained so throughout the 1990s. Other means of long-distance communication, such as telegraphy and postal mail, either had already lost their importance or, like

[41] Axel Dreher, Noel Gaston, and Pim Martens, *Measuring Globalisation: Gauging Its Consequences* (New York: Springer, 2008), 123.

[42] One of the indices that incorporates this indicator is the Maastricht Globalisation Index (MGI). See Pim Martens and M. Raza, *An Updated Maastricht Globalisation Index* (Working Paper 08020. Maastricht: ICIS, 2008).

the Internet, only became common during the second half of the 1990s, making a long-term study unfeasible.

The data come primarily from the studies by George A. Barnett, Joseph G. Salisbury, and Su-Lien Sun, but other research results are also included.[43] The positions that countries occupy in the international telecommunications network and the relations among those countries are defined by these authors in terms of two dimensions, the volume and the direction of communication, and are characterized by the patterns of connectedness, centrality, and integrativeness. This study focuses on the evolution of centrality, which can be regarded as the most comprehensive of the network descriptors mentioned. Centrality is defined as the average number of links needed to reach all other nodes in the group, which in this case are all the countries included in the study. Thus, the lower this value, the more central the position a specific node—i.e., a specific country—occupies in the network. For better comparability, it is best to use a standardized score to measure the centrality of each node (Fig. 2.3).[44]

[43] Su-Lien Sun and George A. Barnett, "The International Telephone Network and Democratization," *Journal of the American Society for Information Science* 45, no. 6 (1994): 411–421; George A. Barnett and Joseph G. T. Salisbury, "Communication and Globalization: A Longitudinal Analysis of the International Telecommunication Network," *Journal of World-Systems Research* 2, no. 1 (1996): 479–505; George Barnett, "A Longitudinal Analysis of the International Telecommunication Network, 1978–1996," *American Behavioral Scientist* 44 (2001): 1651–1652. These studies, in turn, are mostly based on the data taken from an AT&T survey published in AT&T, *The World's Telephones: A Statistical Compilation as of January 1, 1989* (Morristown: AT&T, 1990); and Gregory C. Staple, *TeleGeography 1996. Global Telecommunications Traffic Statistics and Commentary* (London: International Institute of Communications, 1996). See also, International Telecommunication Union, *World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators (WTI) Database*. Geneva, various years.

[44] The cited studies use the network analysis software NEGOPY for their analysis. The aim of the program is "to define clusters of nodes that have more contact with one another that with nodes in other clusters. NEGOPY also sorts nodes into a number of role categories on the basis of their linkage with one another. Final description of the network and its members is expressed in terms of links between nodes rather than in terms of abstract patterns of variance." Barnett, "A Longitudinal Analysis of the International Telecommunication Network, 1978–1996," 1651–1652. NEGOPY determines centrality only by the number of links and does not take into account the strength of the links. Barnett, "A Longitudinal Analysis of the International Telecommunication Network, 1978–1996," op. cit.; William D. Richards and Ronald E. Rice, "The NEGOPY Network Analysis Program," *Social Networks* 3, no. 3 (1981): 215–223.

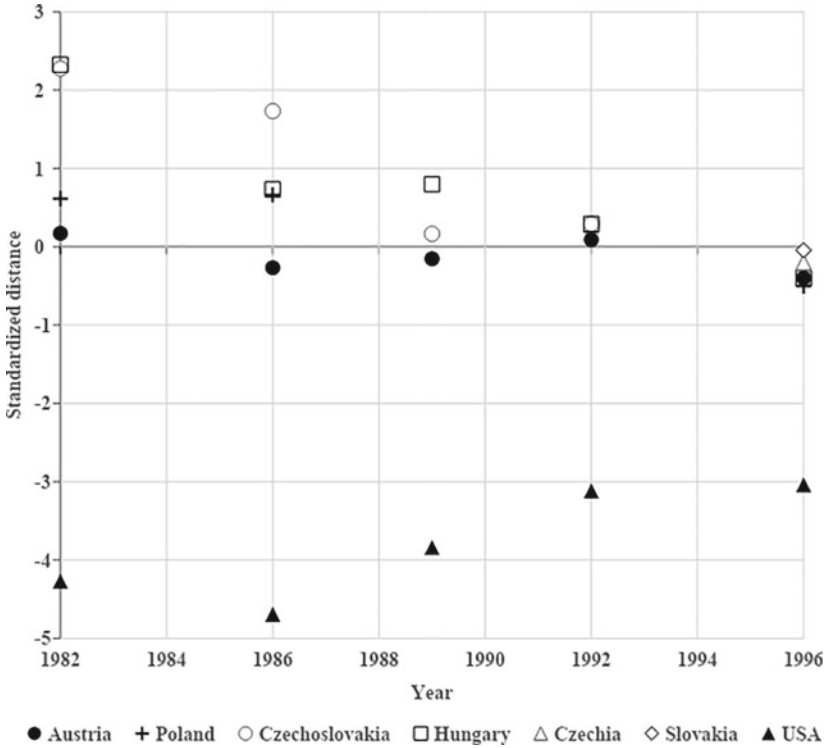

Fig. 2.3 Positions of selected countries in the global telecommunications network based on international phone traffic, 1982–1996 [centrality measured by standardized distance] (*Note* Centrality in the network based on standard distance. Centrality is the average number of links in a telecommunications network that are needed to reach all other nodes, i.e., countries. For better comparability, centrality is measured using the standardized value of the country indicator. Thus, the lower the value, the more central the country is in the network. *Sources* Su-Lien Sun and George A. Barnett. "The International Telephone Network and Democratization," *Journal of the American Society of Information Science* 45, no. 6 [1994]: 411–421; George A. Barnett and Joseph G. T. Salisbury. "Communication and Globalization: A Longitudinal Analysis of the International Telecommunication Network," *Journal of World-Systems Research* 2, no. 1 [1996]: 479–505; George Barnett, "A Longitudinal Analysis of the International Telecommunication Network, 1978–1996," *American Behavioral Scientist* 44, no. 10 [2001]: 1651–1652)

For the East Central European countries under study, data are available for the period 1982–1996, which also allows us to assess the impact of the regime changes on international telecommunication traffic. In this period, worldwide information exchange increased steadily; the international telecommunications network became denser, more tightly connected, and the system itself became more highly centralized and integrated. All of this represents a significant advance in globalization.[45]

During the 1980s, the structure of the global telecommunications network remained fairly stable: no discernible changes occurred in the distribution of countries occupying central, peripheral, or intermediary positions. Industrialized nations of the West, including the United States, Canada, and Western European countries such as the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Italy, Switzerland, and the Netherlands were the most central in the global telecommunications network throughout this decade. The periphery was made up of Third World and Eastern Bloc societies. Between these two groups, some European nations and several Asian countries with rapidly developing economies occupied intermediate positions. While during this decade the 'Asian Tigers' and the Latin American countries moved slightly closer to the centre of the global network, no change was seen in the case of the European state socialist countries.[46]

After 1989, however, a significant shift occurred in the positions occupied by the East Central European countries under study. Within just a few years, they markedly converged to the centre of the international telecommunications network. A comparison with Austria demonstrates this dynamic: while Austria was much closer to the centre of the network than the East Central European countries in the 1980s, its advantage quickly evaporated after the regime changes. Meanwhile, the East Central European countries were also converging among themselves: Hungary and Czechoslovakia—as well as its successor states—caught up with Poland, which up until then had been the most globally integrated country within the group as far as telecommunications were concerned. In parallel, the 'Asian Tigers' and several Latin American nations drifted towards the periphery, i.e., their relatively favourable location in the network was taken over by the new democracies of East Central Europe,

[45] Barnett, "A Longitudinal Analysis of the International Telecommunication Network, 1978–1996," 1640.

[46] Sun and Barnett, "The International Telephone Network and Democratization," 417–418.

which had by then established more extensive communications links with the other countries (Fig. 2.3).[47]

These results were confirmed by employing other methods of network analysis to avoid method bias. Besides the positional or link analysis outlined above, the relations among countries were examined with multidimensional scaling and cluster analysis. These studies also demonstrate that after the regime changes, the East Central European countries moved closer to the countries occupying central positions, while also forming a separate group of their own in the meantime. By the 1990s, Austria was just another member of the same group.[48]

It is also noteworthy that in the 1980s, the country generating the highest telephone traffic with East Central European state socialist countries was a Western European country, the Federal Republic of Germany, and not the Soviet Union, which was central to their economic relations and political alliance, yet it appeared much lower down the list.[49] With the well-known political and economic reorientation after 1989, this pattern became even stronger. It is also evident that the foreign telecommunications traffic of the East Central European countries was always concentrated on Western Europe in this period, while only a small fraction of the total volume of calls was either initiated to or from Third World countries or, in general, overseas.[50]

As a result of this process, the biggest change in the entire global telecommunications network seen in the 1980s and 1990s occurred in the positions of the East Central European states.[51] While, in general, a country's position in this network strongly correlates with its level of economic development, this was not found to be the case for the East Central European countries. In the 1980s, their relative economic

[47] Barnett, "A Longitudinal Analysis of the International Telecommunication Network, 1978–1996," 1647.

[48] Barnett, "A Longitudinal Analysis of the International Telecommunication Network, 1978–1996," 1643–1644; Risa Palm, "International Telephone Calls: Global and Regional Patterns," *Urban Geography* 23, no. 8 (2002): 750–770.

[49] Aharon Kellerman, "International Telecommunications Around the World," *Telecommunications Policy* 14, no. 6 (1990): 465–466.

[50] See, for example, Gregory C. Staple, *TeleGeography 1992: Global Telecommunications Traffic Statistics and Commentary* (London: International Institute of Communications, 1992), 106.

[51] Barnett and Salisbury, "Communication and Globalization," 479–505.

development lagged behind their positions in the network in terms of centrality, but after the regime changes, despite a temporary but strong decline in their economic performance because of the transformation crisis, they moved significantly closer to the centre of the network. This shift demonstrates the importance of political transformation in the process of East Central European globalization.[52] On the other hand, it also illustrates the more general point that globalization not only evolves unevenly, but it often proceeds by leaps and bounds.

As has already been pointed out, the analysis of telecommunications networks cannot provide full insight into the global information flows. Further pieces of research have revealed that other global networks, in particular international financial and trade information systems, exhibited characteristics very similar to those of the telecommunications networks in the 1980s and 1990s: basically the same countries belonged to their respective core, periphery, and semiperiphery, and their dynamics of change was also comparable.[53] In accordance with these results, other research revealed a similar structure for the global telecommunications and transportation networks with regard to linkage and centrality.[54] These outcomes certainly make the arguments presented above more robust, but the study of other areas of information flows can shed further light on their validity. Thus, in what follows, the results will be complemented by observations concerning print and the electronic press.

Print media and television were among the most important transmitters of information worldwide in the second half of the twentieth century, with very different temporal dynamics. Their role in international information exchange is, however, less well documented and understood than that of telecommunications. Taking into consideration the availability of sources, we will examine the patterns of news coverage in the press, the origin of feature films screened, and the structure of television programmes in order to glean insights about how they connected East Central European societies to the global flow of information and cultural products.

[52] Paul. J. J. Welfens, "Telecommunications and Transition in Central and Eastern Europe," *Telecommunications Policy* 19, no. 7 (1995): 561–77.

[53] George A. Barnett, Joseph G. T. Salisbury, Chul Woo Kim, and Anna Langhorne, "Globalization and International Communication," *Journal of International Communication* 6, no. 2 (1999): 43.

[54] Young Choi, "Global Networks in Telecommunication and Transportation," *Gazette* 51 (1993): 132.

During the state socialist period in East Central Europe, the direct political control of the print and electronic press, for obvious reasons, had a significant influence on the content of the information disseminated by the press. The survey of news coverage in the most prominent dailies also reveals notable differences in the structure of the various news categories featured in the newspapers of the region as compared to those of other European regions. In 1970, in Czechoslovakia and Hungary, a relatively large share of the news published in dailies was devoted to foreign policy issues. What is striking is that in addition to the high proportion of coverage focusing on the East Central European region, Europe as a whole was also prominently represented, with an average of 58% of the foreign news covering the European continent. Meanwhile, news about the Soviet Union accounted for a very low proportion (1.4%). In the Western European—British and German—newspapers surveyed, the share of news about Europe was 42% of the international pieces, the rest being about the other continents.[55]

Of note for the research questions examined here is the relatively limited coverage of the Third World in East Central European newspapers during this period. For example, Africa appeared in 2.1% of the international news in the surveyed newspapers, compared to 3.1% in their Western European counterparts. Latin America, on the other hand, featured much more in dailies in both parts of the continent, accounting for 14.2% and 14.5% of the foreign news in the East and West, respectively.[56] In the following years, the differences between the western press and its East Central European counterpart gradually faded: in 1979, Polish and Hungarian daily newspapers and radio and television broadcasts continued to give high prominence to news reports from their own continent, but by then the gaps had closed between them and the media outlets of the Western European countries in terms of the news structure observed.[57]

[55] The newspaper samples included various types of papers, such as elite and popular organs, mass-circulation and small newspapers, to represent a cross-section of news readership. The Czechoslovakian and Hungarian samples each consisted of ten papers with a combined circulation of some 2 million. George Gerbner and George Marvanyi, "The Many Worlds of the World's Press," *Journal of Communication* 27, no. 1 (1977): 53–54.

[56] Gerbner and Marvanyi, "The Many Worlds of the World's Press," 58.

[57] In Poland, three daily newspapers were selected for inclusion in the study, along with one tele-newscast and two evening radio newscasts on different channels. In Hungary, the media samples were drawn from six national daily newspapers and the evening news of the

The composition of feature films screened in the state socialist countries of East Central Europe clearly demonstrates the moderate extent and selectivity of cultural globalization in the region. In 1970, in Western and Southern European countries—as in many other parts of the world—the market was dominated by American feature films: even in Italy, with its advanced film industry, the market share of American movies was over 50%. In Poland and Hungary, on the other hand, the proportion of American productions ranged between 10% and 20%, with French, Italian, British, and German movies also representing a relatively small fraction, as domestically produced films and imports from the state socialist countries made up the bulk of the releases.[58] This pattern only slightly changed over the following decade, with American pieces accounting for 24% of the feature films shown in Hungary in 1985, compared to 12% in Czechoslovakia and 9% in Poland. It is also noteworthy that, while some Western European countries were already showing movies shot in India, Hong Kong, and other non-Western countries in both cinemas and on television screens during the 1970s and 1980s, East Central European distributors showed little interest in such productions.[59]

Television, an emerging medium since the 1950s, gradually became the most important disseminator of information about the transnational world—often in defiance of the preferences of the political leadership—for the widest sections of the population in state socialist East Central Europe. As a result, it had stronger globalization effects than any other information channel in the region. This process was facilitated by the spread of television sets, which itself followed international patterns and was particularly rapid in the 1960s and 1970s: in Poland, for example, there were only 14 licences per 1,000 inhabitants in 1960, which increased to 66 by 1965 and 129 by 1970; by the second half of the 1970s, most households owned a set.[60]

main radio and television channels. UNESCO, *Foreign News in the Media: International Reporting in 29 Countries* (Paris: UNESCO, 1985), 18–19, 41.

[58] UNESCO, *Transnational Communication and Cultural Industries* (Paris: UNESCO, 1982), 12.

[59] UNESCO, *World Communication Report. Part One. Communication Statistics* (Paris: International Programme for Development of Communication, 1987), Table 2.2.

[60] Béla Tomka, *Austerities and Aspirations: A Comparative History of Growth, Consumption and Quality of Life in East Central Europe Since 1945* (Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2020), 110–111.

Until the 1980s, television broadcasting in Europe was strongly demarcated by national boundaries. Public televisions, regulated by national authorities, predominated, without much ambition to broadcast beyond their home countries' borders. In fact, due to the technological limitations of terrestrial transmission and language barriers, cross-border broadcasting had only a limited audience in the European state socialist countries—with the notable exception of the GDR and the Western parts of Yugoslavia, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia, where watching West German, Austrian, or Italian channels was relatively common.[61] Already in the first decades of television history, programmes in all three countries under study featured similar genres to those on public television in Western Europe, i.e., mainly feature films and news, along with educational, sports, entertainment, and children's programmes.[62]

Television editorial offices, like newspapers, were under political control, although the severity of the supervision varied by periods and by countries. For example, in Czechoslovakia, censorship was abolished in 1968, only to be reinstated after the Prague Spring was crushed later in the same year. In Hungary, there was no such clear break, but oversight was gradually relaxed and the authorities became more permissive from the late 1960s on.[63] In the countries of the region, domestic and Eastern Bloc-produced programmes were carefully prioritized, if only because of the unavailability of funds in hard currencies for the acquisition of foreign shows. While a significant share of total programme imports in Poland and Hungary came from Western Europe throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the most striking feature in international comparison was the weak representation of American productions.[64]

[61] Heather Gumbert, "Exploring Transnational Media Exchange in the 1960s," *View Journal of European Television History and Culture* 3, no. 5 (2014): 50–59.

[62] Kaarle Nordenstreng and Tapio Varis, *Television Traffic—A One-Way Street? A Survey and Analysis of the International Flow of Television Programme Material* (Paris: UNESCO, 1974), 22–24.

[63] Irena Carpentier Reifová, Petr Bednařík, and Šimon Dominik, "Between Politics and Soap: The Articulation of Ideology and Melodrama in Czechoslovak Communist Television Serials, 1975–89," in *Popular Television in Authoritarian Europe*, ed. Peter Goddard (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2013), 94.

[64] Nordenstreng and Varis, *Television Traffic—A One-Way Street?*, 25; Tapio Varis, *International Flow of Television Programmes* (Paris: UNESCO, 1985), 35.

Thus, there is no doubt that within these countries, there were serious limitations to television conveying any of the prominent values and attitudes that were spreading globally at the time. This was partly because such orientations were often associated with Americanization, a trend that the state socialist regimes actively sought to inhibit. For instance, television played a lesser role in disseminating consumer culture in the region compared to many other parts of the world, as advertising on East Central European television was significantly more subdued than on American or Western European channels.

Notwithstanding, the impact of television and cinema in this respect should certainly not be underestimated. Programme makers everywhere in Eastern Europe were aware that the audience had a strong demand for Western entertainment.[65] Both Western films and TV series, which slowly made their way not only to Yugoslavia but also to other Eastern European countries such as, most prominently, Hungary and Poland, and the news coverage of global events shown on TV screen in these countries were also important sources of information about consumer societies: fashionable clothes, streamlined cars, rich interiors, supermarkets, and colourful streets, even if only in a crime movie or a comedy, were all part and parcel of the content. From the 1970s onwards, this sort of information reached virtually all social classes in East Central Europe, mainly through television, and made them aware of the differences between their own way of life and that of Western consumers.[66] The impact of television, however, went beyond consumer culture: despite the selective nature of the information provided and the typical political biases and distortions of the programmes, the spread of television enabled broad sections of these societies to become regularly and experientially informed—for the first time in history—about political and sporting events taking place in distant parts of the world, as well as about cultural and economic news from those regions.

After 1989, the print press, as well as film distribution and television broadcasting, underwent a fundamental transformation in East Central Europe. Alongside democratization and commercialization, advances in

[65] Sabina Mihelj, "Television Entertainment in Socialist Eastern Europe: Between Cold War Politics and Global Developments," in *Popular Television in Eastern Europe During and Since Socialism*, eds. Timothy Havens, Anikó Imre, and Kati Lustyik (New York: Routledge, 2013), 17.

[66] Anikó Imre, *TV Socialism* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2016), 9.

technology and transnationalization were the main drivers of change. In addition to the disappearance of political control and the emergence of market conditions, the media was also subject to rapid technological change, which was facilitated by the unfolding innovations of what is known as 'the third communications revolution' or 'the digital revolution' taking place across the globe during this period.[67] As a result, all over East Central Europe the spread of satellite and cable television also made dozens of channels available to a significant proportion of households within just a few years. Transnationalization affected not only the ownership structure of the press, but also the prevailing forms of media and the content they conveyed. Western influence was strongly felt in the print press, but was particularly noticeable in television and cinematic productions.[68] The selection of programmes increased, but programming also saw a sharp rise in the share of foreign content, along with a decline in productions from East Central Europe, and the virtual disappearance of programmes from the successor states of the Soviet Union, while American series and other shows assumed a dominant position. As a result, the share of imports from Western Europe also fell, but the total number of broadcasting hours dedicated to programmes from these countries actually grew because of the boom in total transmission time and the rise in the share of imports. Over time, Brazilian, Argentinean, and Mexican series, particularly soap operas, also appeared and accounted for a significant proportion of programmes.[69] More than ever, television

[67] Cherie Steele and Arthur A. Stein, "Communications Revolutions and International Relations," in *Technology, Development, and Democracy: International Conflict and Cooperation in the Information Age*, ed. Juliann Emmons Allison (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2022), 25–33; David A. L. Levy, *Europe's Digital Revolution: Broadcasting Regulation, the EU and the Nation State* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001).

[68] Ágnes Gulyás, "Western Influences in the Print Media of Post-Communist East Central Europe," *Journal of International Communication* 10, no. 1 (2004): 117.

[69] Preben Sepstrup and Anura Goonasakera, *TV Transnationalisation: Europe and Asia* (Paris: UNESCO, 1994), 33; Sylwia Szostak, "Poland's Return to Europe: Polish Terrestrial Broadcasters and TV Fiction," *Journal of European Television History and Culture* 1, no. 2 (2012): 80; Tamás Terestyéni, "A magyarországi televíziós műsorkínálat változása a nyolcvanas évek közepétől a kilencvenes évek végéig," *Jel-Kép* 1 (1999): 41–62; Timothy Havens, Evelyn Bottando, and Matthew S. Thatcher, "Intra-European Media Imperialism Hungarian Program Imports and the Television Without Frontiers Directive," in *Popular Television in Eastern Europe During and Since Socialism*, eds. Havens, Imre, and Lustyik, 123–140.

became a tool of cultural globalization in East Central Europe; in this respect, its impact was only surpassed by the Internet after the turn of the millennium.

2.4 The Movement of People: Travel and Migration

As the fourth dimension of globalization, the dynamics of crossing national borders by people are explored. Four main types of flows will be considered: tourism, migration, labour migration (temporary employment abroad), and the international mobility of students. These movements are not equally important in the context of globalization: student exchanges do not usually affect the population of a country as widely as tourism; similarly, emigration exerts less of a globalizing effect on a society than immigration into the country concerned.

The movement of citizens across borders is a particular aspect of globalization, because in the second half of the twentieth century and beyond it was much more heavily regulated and constrained by governments than, for example, the foreign trade of goods. The dynamics of the flow of people were therefore even more affected by political changes than those of the other three arenas of globalization under study. The research literature looks extensively at these political factors and distinguishes between several types of border regimes, of which the three countries under study belonged to the so-called Eastern border regime after the communist takeover.[70] This meant, above all, rigid entry and exit regulations, restrictive practices in the issuance of passports and visas, a comprehensive system of border surveillance, severe penalties for illegal border crossing, and a wide range of prohibitive customs duties and procedures.[71] The basic characteristics of the Eastern model persisted until 1989, but a certain liberalization in this respect had already begun in the mid-1950s,

[70] Péter Bencsik, *Border Regimes in Twentieth Century Europe* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2022), 4; Bethan Loftus, "Border Regimes and the Sociology of Policing," *Policing and Society* 25, no. 1 (2015): 115–125; Libora Oates-Indruchová and Muriel Blaive, "Border Visions and Border Regimes in Cold War Eastern Europe," *Journal of Contemporary History* 50, no. 3 (2015): 656–659.

[71] Muriel Blaive and Thomas Lindenberger, "Border Guarding as Social Practice: A Case Study of Czech Communist Governance and Hidden Transcripts," in *Walls, Borders, Boundaries: Spatial and Cultural Practices in Europe*, eds. Marc Silberman, Karen E. Till, and Janet Ward (New York: Berghahn, 2012), 97–112.

and in the 1960s a more moderate form of the Eastern border regime emerged in the region. At the same time, after the late 1960s, the East Central European countries diverged in terms of the openness of their borders.[72] The changes in the border regime had a profound impact on both tourism and migration.

As in many regions across the world, mass tourism in the state socialist countries of East Central Europe emerged after World War II, mainly in the form of domestic travel; foreign visits remained much more limited.[73] In the 1950s, even travel to other Eastern Bloc countries was a privilege in these societies. In the following decade, the restrictions on visits to the state socialist countries were significantly relaxed, leading to a substantial growth of tourism among the three East Central European countries under study as well as other European state socialist countries by the 1970s.

From the mid-1960s onwards, Polish and Hungarian passport policies also became more permissive concerning travel to the West. Hungarian citizens were initially allowed to travel to the West once every three years; then in 1982, it increased to once a year. In Poland, the practice of issuing passports permitting travel to the West was significantly relaxed in 1987, while in Hungary a new passport introduced in 1988 allowed the holder to leave the country freely.[74] However, the amount of foreign currency, particularly hard currency, that could be legally purchased was always severely restricted in both countries even if those citizens who had saved money abroad, received bank transfers from relatives or acquaintances living abroad, or had otherwise legally acquired funds in foreign currencies were allowed to deposit them in special accounts for use when travelling abroad.[75]

[72] Bencsik, *Border Regimes in Twentieth Century Europe*, 113.

[73] Derek R. Hall, "Evolutionary Pattern of Tourism Development in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union," in *Tourism and Economic Development in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union*, ed. Derek R. Hall (London: Bellhaven Press, 1991), 104–105.

[74] Péter Bencsik, "Documents of Passage, Travel Opportunities and Border Traffic in 20th Century Hungary," *Minorities, Politics, Society* 2, no. 1 (2002): 51–70.

[75] Mikolaj Morzycki-Markowski, "How People Crossed Borders in Socialism: The Polish Case," in *"Schleichwege": Inoffizielle Begegnungen sozialistischer Staatsbürger zwischen 1956 und 1989*, eds. Włodzimierz Borodziej, Jerzy Kochanowski, and Joachim von Puttkame (Köln: Böhlau, 2010), 55–66.

Czechoslovakia was an example of a stricter border regime in much of the state socialist period. The 1965 passport law maintained the requirement for an exit permit to visit the West, even though from that point on applications were treated somewhat more leniently.[76] In 1968, the introduction of new, more liberal regulations was already in the pipeline, but the idea was shelved after the military intervention of the Warsaw Pact. In 1969, travel to the West became almost impossible, except for visits to relatives living legally in the West—which required an invitation letter and endorsement from the authorities—and organized tourist trips. While individual travel to the West was not formally banned, the police would generally not allow it. Visits to neighbouring socialist countries were much easier to realize. However, in 1981, authorities implemented travel restrictions concerning Poland in response to the political events unfolding there. As a prelude to the regime change, from 1988 onwards, exit permits were generally granted permitting travel to the West without any difficulties, but currency restrictions remained in place.

Citizens of the three East Central European countries under study therefore mainly visited the neighbouring state socialist countries, and most of these visits could be categorized as shopping tourism.[77] The proportion of trips to countries outside Europe, including the Third World, was particularly low. This is illustrated quite clearly by the case of Hungary. In 1958, even if we take all the continents into account, only a few thousand trips were made outside Europe by Hungarian citizens. While this number increased in the following decades, even as late as the 1980s, merely a few tens of thousands of overseas trips were recorded in the statistics (Fig. 2.4). A significant proportion of these travellers were not tourists but individuals on diplomatic missions or on business for

[76] Sune Bechmann Pedersen and Christian Noack, "Introduction: Crossing the Iron Curtain: An Introduction," in *Tourism and Travel During the Cold War: Negotiating Tourist Experiences Across the Iron Curtain*, eds. Sune Bechmann Pedersen and Christian Noack (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2019), 3.

[77] Grzegorz Gołembski, "Tourism in the Economy of Shortage," *Annals of Tourism Research* 17, no. 1 (1990): 55–68; Mark Keck-Szajbel, "Shop Around the Bloc: Trader Tourism and Its Discontents on the East German-Polish Border," in *Communism Unwrapped: Consumption in Cold War Eastern Europe*, eds. Paulina Bren and Mary Neuburger (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 374–392; Jerzy Kochanowski, "Pioneers of the Free Market Economy? Unofficial Commercial Exchange Between People from the Socialist Bloc Countries (1970s and 1980s)," *Journal of Modern European History* 8, no. 2 (2010): 196–220.

their companies. It is also worth noting that although Hungarians visited Asia more frequently than any other continent, the dominant country of destination was Turkey, and the majority of these visits consisted of short shopping trips to Istanbul where items such as jewellery and fur were relatively inexpensive.

Migration has a long tradition in East Central Europe. However, since the mid-nineteenth century, East-to-West population movements have

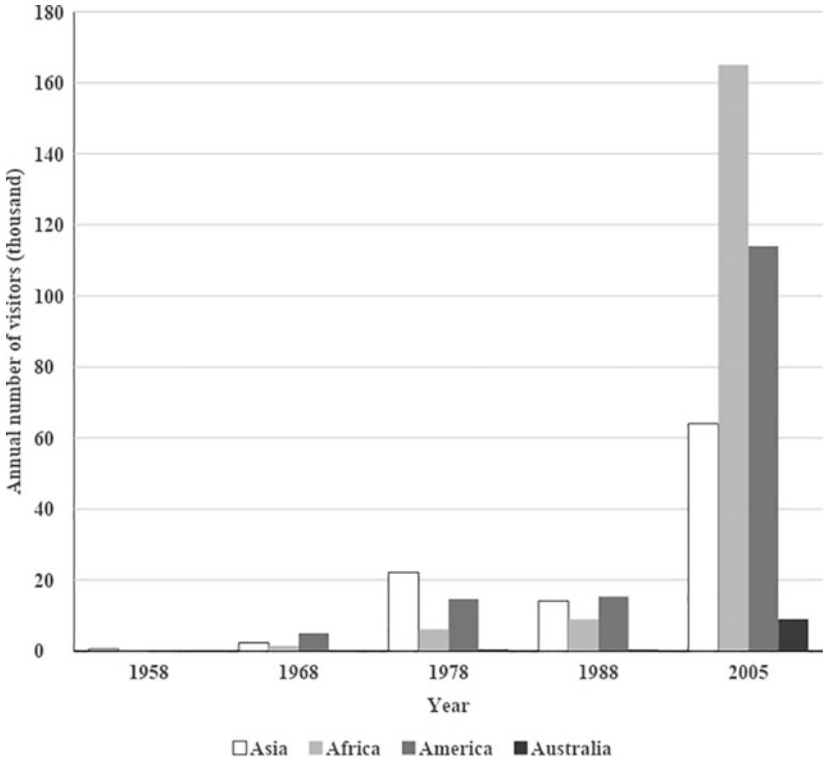

Fig. 2.4 Non-European destinations of travellers from Hungary, 1958–2005 (annual number of outbound visitors) (*Source* KSH. *Statisztikai Évkönyv.* Budapest: KSH, various volumes [the author's own calculations])

dominated in the region.[78] While the Cold War and the Iron Curtain significantly reduced migration, it certainly did not stop it. Between 1950 and the regime changes, ethnic migration, typically facilitated by intergovernmental agreements, comprised approximately three-quarters of East-to-West migration. The largest group, numbering around 1,430,000 ethnic Germans, migrated westwards between 1950 and 1993 as a result of an agreement between Poland and the Federal Republic of Germany that aimed for ethnic homogenization. Refugees constituted another large group with some 606,000 persons.[79] Most of them left their homes in waves following political crises, availing themselves of the opportunity whenever the borders were briefly opened. These waves of refugees include those fleeing during or in the aftermath of the dramatic events in Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968, and Poland in 1980/1981. In addition, despite the strict border regime, illegal migration persisted throughout. These population movements were one-directional, as there was hardly any immigration to the East Central European countries during the Cold War. While the aforementioned administrative hurdles for crossing the borders were certainly one of the reasons for this asymmetrical situation, the state socialist countries were also not seen as attractive destinations from either a political or an economic point of view. Thus, migration in this region, and in Eastern Europe in general, was much less likely to mediate globalizing effects in the post-war decades than was the case for most Western or Southern European societies.

Labour migration—or temporary migration of workers—presents a similar picture. As far as inward labour migration is concerned, while the German Democratic Republic (GDR) offered employment to relatively large numbers of people from non-European, mostly communist or socialist-oriented countries such as Cuba, Vietnam, Angola, and Mozambique, this was less common in the East Central European countries under study. The dynamics of inward labour migration certainly accelerated in the mid-1960s. Czechoslovakia took the lead: the first wave of Vietnamese workers arrived in 1967, their headcount reaching a total of 2400 over the years. They were followed by a contingent of 5500 persons in 1974. Finally, the third wave, which started in 1980, saw

[78] Heinz Fassmann and Rainer Münz, "European East–West Migration, 1945–1992," in *The Cambridge Survey of World Migration*, ed. Robin Cohen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 470–480.

[79] Fassmann and Münz, "European East–West Migration, 1945–1992," 473.

around 50,000 Vietnamese workers finding shorter or longer employment in Czechoslovak factories within a decade.[80] Between 1978 and 1979, 23,160 Cubans were also employed in Czechoslovakia.[81] In 1980, Hungary followed suit by signing an agreement with Cuba for hosting approximately 3000, mostly female, textile workers from the Caribbean country during the next few years. They typically received a short vocational training and then participated in a three-and-a half year apprenticeship as skilled workers. In terms of its structure, the programme resembled similar exchange schemes in other East Central European state socialist countries.[82] As the above figures reflect, labour migration into the East Central European countries remained limited, especially by West European standards, and had only a modest impact on the labour markets and the societies of the region.

Full employment featured prominently in the official ideology of the state socialist countries, but it was first of all the labour shortage generated by the process of forced growth that contributed to the realization of these goals.[83] As a consequence, while it is certainly true that, with the sole exception of Yugoslavia, employment abroad was held back by administrative means, a key push factor behind seeking work abroad was also missing. Thus, while foreign employment was not entirely unknown in the three East Central European countries covered in this study, it was very restricted in scale, almost entirely confined to the countries of the COMECON, and was usually based on intergovernmental agreements of limited duration. For example, the 1967 arrangement between Hungary and the GDR resulted in a total of about 30,000–50,000 Hungarian employees finding jobs in the East German industry and service sector over the next decade and a half, with a few thousand East Germans participating in the organized exchange. In much the same way, several

[80] Alena K. Alamgir and Christina Schwenkel, "From Socialist Assistance to National Self-Interest: Vietnamese Labor Migration into CMEA Countries," in *Alternative Globalizations: Eastern Europe and the Postcolonial World*, eds. James Mark, Artemy M. Kalinovsky, and Steffi Mahrung (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 2020), 109.

[81] Alena Alamgir, "Mobility: Education and Labour," in *Socialism Goes Global: The Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in the Age of Decolonization*, eds. James Mark and Paul Betts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022), 315.

[82] Bálint Tolmár, *Cuban Women Workers in Hungary*, https://transperiphery.com/Cubans-in-Hungary, accessed 10 October 2023.

[83] Kornai, *The Socialist System*, 204–216, 530–533.

tens of thousands of Polish workers, mainly women, were employed in Czechoslovak industry in the 1970s and 1980s.[84] In the same decades, a few thousand Polish coal miners were hired in Hungary.

Working in the Soviet Union was an often hard experience for the East Central European employees, as the work had to be done at a great distance from home, often in very harsh conditions, and usually in a colony-like manner. Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and several other state socialist countries undertook the implementation of major development projects in the energy sector across the Soviet Union including, for example, the construction of a 2750 km gas pipeline from Orenburg to the Soviet Union's western border, along with the commencement of oil production in Tengiz. These projects involved thousands of employees over a period of several years.[85]

In addition, East Central European companies were also active in the Third World.[86] The labour migration that started as a result of the latter affected only a limited number of sectors, particularly construction. As an indication of the size of labour migration, in 1980 a total of 62,000 Polish workers were employed abroad, accounting for less than half a per cent of the active population of the country.[87] This cannot be considered insignificant, but it certainly does not justify the claim about "the robustness of mobility within the state socialist camp".[88]

For the assessment of international student migration in the East Central European region, we rely on a methodology of network analysis similar to the one we used to study information flows. The results show that in the mid- to late 1980s, the countries of East Central Europe occupied central positions in the global student exchange network in terms of hosting foreign students. While in terms of centrality, the United States,

[84] This number refers to the total number of workers employed during the entire indicated period. Accordingly, in a given year, the number was lower. Ondrej Klípa, "Escaping the Double Burden: Female Polish Workers in State Socialist Czechoslovakia," *Slavic Review* 78, no. 4 (2019): 1009–1027.

[85] Richter, "Economic Integration Within COMECON and with the Western Economies," 345–346.

[86] Zsombor Bódy, "Opening Up to the "Third World" or Taking a Detour to the "West"? The Hungarian Presence in Algeria from the 1960s to the 1980s," *Comparativ* 33, no. 3 (2023): 377–399.

[87] Dorota Praszałovicz, "Polen," in *Enzyklopädie Migration in Europa: Vom 17. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart*, Hg. Klaus J. Bade (Paderborn: Schöning, 2007), 266.

[88] Alamgir, "Mobility: Education and Labour," 292.

Canada, Japan, the Western European states, as well as some other Asian countries such as China and India were ahead of the East Central European countries, the latter still enjoyed better positions within the network than, for example, Norway, Spain, Portugal, South Korea, or Argentina.[89] Therefore, East Central Europe was more globalized in this respect than in the other aspects considered so far. However, as already indicated, this finding is based on the number and origin of incoming students.[90] In view of outward student mobility, the East Central European societies were in a much less central position, as their students had hardly any access to universities and other educational institutions outside the Eastern Bloc until the late 1980s.

Notwithstanding the earlier liberalization trends in Hungary and Poland, the real breakthrough in respect to border crossing for the whole of East Central Europe was brought about by the fall of state socialism. So much so that for many contemporaries, the opening of the borders was the single greatest achievement of the regime changes. Tourism even played a direct role in the collapse of state socialism; when Hungary lifted its strict border controls with Austria in the summer of 1989, East German tourists flooded Hungary's western neighbour without a permit from the authorities of their home country. This development triggered a domino effect in the GDR, contributing significantly to the disintegration of the East German state.

In the new East Central European democracies, citizens were not only able to obtain passports without prior authorization but could also cross the border in all directions, all the more so because the Western European countries and many others around the world had lifted visa requirements for travellers from these states.[91] This also happened in the opposite direction, even though citizens of Western countries had been

[89] Tse-Mein Chen and George A. Barnett, "Research on International Student Flows from a Macro Perspective: A Network Analysis of 1985, 1989 and 1995," *Higher Education* 39, no. 4 (2000): 442–443.

[90] On the students arriving from socialist-oriented countries, see Péter Apor, "Szocialista migráció, poszt-kolonializmus és szolidaritás: Magyarország és az Európán kívüli migráció," *Antro-Pólus* 2, no. 2 (2017): 26–44.

[91] Mathias Czaika, Hein de Haas, and María Villares-Varela, "The Global Evolution of Travel Visa Regimes," *Population and Development Review* 44, no. 3 (2018): 589–622.

able to visit the region with relatively little hassle since the 1960s.[92] At the same time, arrangements easing travel between the former state socialist countries were also maintained, allowing citizens of a number of countries, including successor states of the Soviet Union, unrestrained passage through the borders of the East Central European countries although their freedom to travel on to Western Europe was more limited because of visa regulations. The region thus became a unique zone of travel and migration in the 1990s, open to a large number of people from both Eastern and Western countries.[93]

The late 1980s and early 1990s saw a huge increase in the number of border crossings in East Central Europe; masses of people began to travel from East to West and from West to East for shopping, visiting relatives, tourism, or employment.[94] In Poland, entries and exits amounted to 19 million in 1985, rising to 84 million in 1990, and 262 million in 1996.[95] A similar development was observed in the Czech Republic, while Hungary and Slovakia each recorded around 100 million border crossings annually in the mid-1990s. Most border crossers were classified as tourists although this designation continued to cover many activities that had little to do with visiting cultural landmarks or natural tourist attractions. Many travelled abroad several times a month for shopping or conducting small-scale trade.[96] However, genuine tourism and visits beyond the immediate region were also on the rise. The growing global openness is exemplified by the significant increase in travel beyond Europe. Taking the earlier Hungarian example, around the turn of the

[92] Ewa Morawska, *The New-Old Transmigrants, Their Transnational Lives, and Ethnicization: A Comparison of 19th/20th and 20th/21st Century Situations* (Florence: European University Institute, 1999); Robin Cohen, ed., *The Cambridge Survey of World Migration* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

[93] Claire Wallace and Dariusz Stola, "Introduction: Patterns of Migration in Central Europe," in *Patterns of Migration in Central Europe*, eds. Claire Wallace and Dariusz Stola (Houndmills: Palgrave, 2001), 16; Attila Melegh, *The Migration Turn and Eastern Europe: A Global Historical Sociological Analysis* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2023), 189–201.

[94] Allan M. Williams and Vladimir Baláž, *Tourism in Transition: Economic Change in Central Europe* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris Publishers, 2000), 20.

[95] Tomasz Kuba Kozlowski, "Migration Flows in the 1990s: Challenges for Entry, Asylum and Integration Policy in Poland," in *The Challenge of East–West Migration for Poland*, eds. Krystyna Iglicka and Keith Sword (London: Macmillan, 1999), 45–65.

[96] Krystyna Iglicka, "The Economics of Petty Trade on the Eastern Polish Border," in *The Challenge of East–West Migration for Poland*, eds. Iglicka and Sword, 120–144.

millennium, up to ten times as many Hungarians could gain first-hand experience of life in Africa and the Americas compared to the years preceding the regime change (Fig. 2.4).

As a consequence of the fall of the Iron Curtain and the transformation crisis following the collapse of the centrally controlled economies that generated mass unemployment, the nature of permanent migration as well as that of labour migration fundamentally changed across East Central Europe. On the one hand, both types of outward migration flow significantly increased; on the other, immigration into the East Central European region, which had been negligible before, reached significant proportions. Having said that, methodological difficulties complicate the accurate assessment of the processes. In this period, it is much more complicated, if not entirely impossible, to distinguish between the temporary migration of labour on the one hand and migration that can be considered permanent on the other because administrative hurdles preventing people from returning home or engaging in circular migration were either no longer present or had became much less significant in the region and, overall, across Europe.

The dominant direction of migration remained East–West and the number of those leaving increased.[97] However, the dynamics of emigration was far from being constant over time. This type of population movement accelerated in the first few years after the change of regime, then slowed down for a while with yet another uptick in the number of people leaving the region after EU accession, the latter mainly affecting Poland.[98] In addition, the structure of emigration also became more complex. On the one hand, ethnic emigration, which used to dominate, lost much of its importance from the mid-1990s, as the size of ethnic minorities clearly had declined in East Central Europe by this time, and economic motives now clearly dominated the causes for expatriation. On

[97] Marek Okólski, "The Effects of Political and Economic Transition on International Migration in Eastern and Central Europe," in *International Migration: Prospects and Policies in a Global Market*, Douglas S. Massey and J. Edward Taylor (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 36.

[98] Hein de Haas, Simona Vezzoli, and María Villares-Varela, *Opening the Floodgates? European Migration Under Restrictive and Liberal Border Regimes, 1950–2010* (International Migration Institute Working Papers 150, February 2019), 34–35.

the other hand, circular migration, also known as temporary or incomplete emigration, became a significant form of movement.[99] While until 1989 labour migration was essentially confined to the COMECON area, after the regime changes, the former member states of the COMECON were almost completely excluded as the labour force from East Central Europe flowed towards Western Europe.

Immigration, previously almost non-existent, also became noticeable in the region, with a significant influx of people from outside the continent, in line with general European trends. Foreigners now made up a significant proportion of the residents of some large cities: in 1995, 9–11% of the inhabitants of Prague and 4–6% of Budapest were estimated to be foreign nationals. This group partly consisted of employees of Western companies and international institutions, but Asian immigrants also accounted for a substantial proportion, clearly transmitting powerful global influences through activities like introducing their cuisine and conducting foreign trade.[100] The post-1989 influx of illegal immigrants into East Central Europe was also unprecedented. In the mid-1990s, estimates suggested 200,000 illegal immigrants in the Czech Republic and between 40,000 and 150,000 in Hungary.[101]

The barriers to immigration are also clearly visible: as East Central Europe had little economic and cultural appeal for refugees, the region was mainly seen as a transit point, and refugee numbers remained low compared to Western and Southern European countries. Longer-term trends in immigration are illustrated by the fact that the share of immigrants in the population increased from 4.1% to 4.4% in the Czech Republic, from 0.8% to 2.4% in Slovakia, and from 3.4% to 3.7% in Hungary between 1990 and 2010, while it decreased from 3% to 2.2% in Poland. Meanwhile, in Austria, for example, the already much higher rate

[99] Godfried Engbersen, Marek Okólski, Richard Black, and Cristina Panţîru, "Working out a Way from East to West: EU Enlargement and Labour Migration from Central and Eastern Europe," in *A Continent Moving West? EU Enlargement and Labour Migration from Central and Eastern Europe*, Richard Black, Godfried Engbersen, Marek Okólski, and Cristina Panţîru (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010), 11–18.

[100] Okólski, "The Effects of Political and Economic Transition," 42.

[101] Wallace and Stola, "Introduction: Patterns of Migration in Central Europe," 33; Klaus J. Bade, ed., *Migration in European History* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003), 298.

of 10.3% rose to 15.6% during the same period.[102] The ratio of foreign-born individuals to the total population also shows a similar picture, remaining relatively low in the region.[103] Moreover, these figures include ethnic minorities, typically nationals of neighbouring countries, repatriated by the nation states where their own ethnic group constituted the majority. All four countries under study have diasporas, which accounted for a large share of the people seeking to settle. For example, 70–80% of foreign nationals permanently settled in Hungary between 1989 and 1998 were ethnic Hungarians from Romania, but the Czech Republic and Slovakia had a similarly high proportion of ethnic Czechs and Slovaks among their own immigrants (Fig. 2.5).[104]

The position of East Central European countries in the international student exchange network changed little after the regime changes. Although the number of their connections slightly increased, which certainly reflected a higher degree of globalization in their educational systems, this was a trend observed in many countries worldwide; as a result, the centrality of the East Central European countries in the global education network did not show any major change in the 1990s.[105] On the other hand, there was a large increase in the number of outgoing students, who were now able to enrol in universities in the Western world.[106]

The above survey of the changes that occurred in important areas of globalization during the state socialist period and in the aftermath of the regime changes in East Central Europe provides an opportunity to

[102] James Rayner, "Migration in Europe," in *International Handbook of Migration and Population Distribution*, ed. Michael White (Dordrecht: Springer, 2016), 374.

[103] Philippe Wanner, *Migration Trends in Europe* (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2002), 7.

[104] Marek Okólski, *Europe in Movement: Migration from/to Central and Eastern Europe*. CRM Working Papers, University of Warsaw No. 22/80 (Warsaw: Centre of Migration Research, 2007), 9; Hermann Zeitlhofer, "Tschechien und Slowakei," in *Enzyklopädie Migration in Europa*, Hg. Bade, 285.

[105] Chen and Barnett, "Research on International Student Flows from a Macro Perspective," 446.

[106] Mette Ginnerskov-Dahlberg, *Student Migration from Eastern to Western Europe* (London and New York: Routledge, 2022), 6–11.

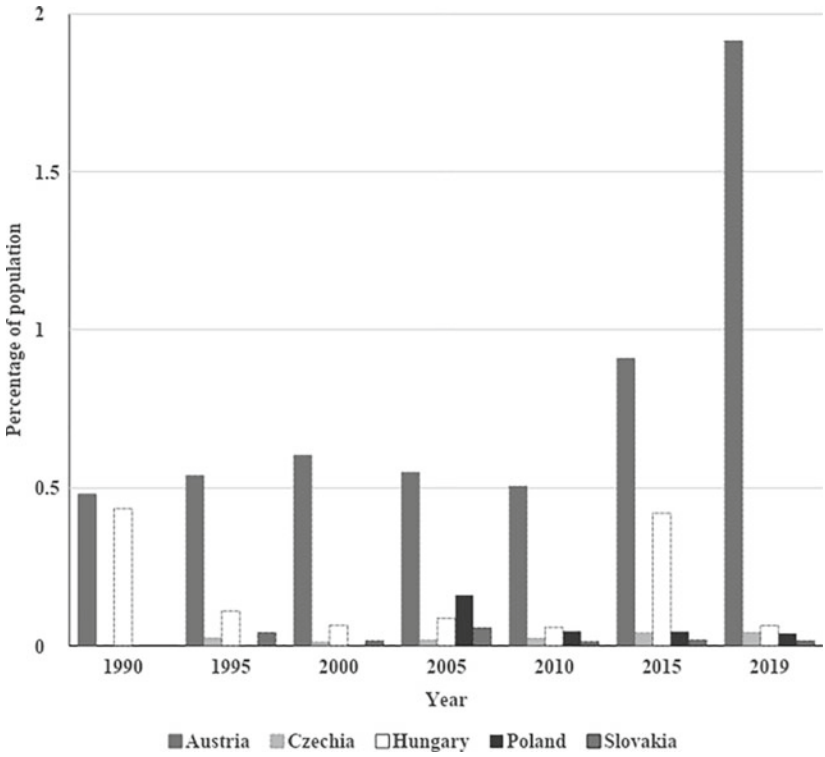

Fig. 2.5 Estimated refugee stock (including asylum seekers) in selected European countries, 1990–2019 (mid-year, percentage of population) (*Note* Estimated data; also includes asylum seekers; Hungary: 1989. *Sources* UN DESA Databases, https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/content/international-migrant-stock, accessed 12 March 2022; World Bank, https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SM.POP.REFG, accessed 12 March 2022)

draw some conclusions about the nature of the process. In the following chapters, we will first discuss two key issues that have been the subject of distinctive and divergent interpretations in the recent literature: the conceptualization of state socialist globalization in East Central Europe and the impact of the regime changes on the globalization process in the region.

CHAPTER 3

How to Conceptualize State Socialist Globalization?

Abstract This chapter discusses the plausibility of key concepts competing in the interpretation of state socialist globalization, particularly 'alternative globalization' and 'socialist protoglobalization'. Throughout the state socialist era, countries in East Central Europe, as well as Eastern European nations overall, sustained moderate economic and cultural ties with the Global South. East-South trade represented only a small fraction of world trade, and the East-South relationship cannot be considered central to the Third World either. Similarly, cultural ties with the Global South had little impact on the East Central European societies. The notion of an 'alternative globalization', as proposed by revisionist approaches to Eastern European state socialist globalization, does not seem useful because the connections that the East Central European countries established with the Third World could not compensate for their limited links with the West. Instead of 'alternative', the terms 'fragmented', 'selective', and 'uneven' appear more valid for conceptualizing state socialist globalization. Focusing on these features of globalization in state socialist East Central Europe can bridge the gap between earlier approaches that focused on the region's isolation and more recent revisionist research.

Keywords Globalization · Alternative globalization · Protoglobalization · Eastern Europe · East Central Europe · State socialism · Post-war era

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https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-63524-3_3

Over the last decade and a half, ambitious attempts have been made to conceptualize the globalization of Eastern Europe, including East Central Europe, during the state socialist period. Several of these have already been mentioned in our study. The new ideas included the relatively straightforward notions of 'red globalization' and 'socialist globalization', but there are also concepts and related interpretations that do not merely attribute specific features to the globalization of the state socialist countries, but instead assume a more or less separate globalization process involving these countries, and thus make explicit claims about globalization as a whole. Jürgen Osterhammel and Niels P. Petersson suggested the term 'halved globalisation' (*halbierte Globalisierung*), according to which the world disintegrated into an increasingly interconnected Western or capitalist part and a socialist bloc that separated itself from the rest of the globe, consequently cutting globalization itself into two 'halves'.[1] Elsewhere, the same authors explicitly claim that in the decades following World War II the process of globalization "split in two".[2] Others speak of the socialist states experiencing their 'own' globalization,[3] following a line of reasoning that also includes the concept of 'alternative globalization'.[4]

[1] Jürgen Osterhammel and Niels P. Petersson, *Geschichte der Globalisierung: Dimensionen, Prozesse, Epochen* (München: C. H. Beck, 2003), 86–93, 98–99.

[2] Jürgen Osterhammel and Niels P. Petersson, *Globalization: A Short History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 113.

[3] For 'red globalization' see, Oscar Sanchez-Sibony, *Red Globalization: The Political Economy of the Soviet Cold War from Stalin to Khrushchev* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); For 'socialist globalisation(s)' see, James Mark, Artemy M. Kalinovsky, and Steffi Marung, "Introduction," in *Alternative Globalizations: Eastern Europe and the Postcolonial World*, eds. James Mark, Artemy Kalinovsky, and Steffi Marung (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2020), 7; Johanna Bockman, "Socialist Globalization Against Capitalist Neocolonialism: The Economic Ideas Behind the New International Economic Order," *Humanity* 6, no. 1 (2015): 6; Immanuel R. Harisch and Eric Burton, "Sozialistische Globalisierung: Tagebücher der DDR-Freundschaftsbrigaden in Afrika, Asien und Lateinamerika," *Zeithistorische Forschungen/Studies in Contemporary History* 17, no. 3 (2020): 578–591; For 'the socialist states' own globalisation', see Kevin Axe, Tobias Rupprecht, and Alice Trinkle, *Peripheral Liberalism: New Perspectives on the History of the Liberal Script in the (Post-)Socialist World*, SCRIPTS Working Paper No. 13 (Berlin: Freie Universität Berlin, 2021), 14.

[4] Mark, Kalinovsky, and Marung, eds., *Alternative Globalizations*; Anna Calori, Anne-Kristin Hartmetz, Bence Kocsev, and Jan Zofka, "Alternative Globalization? Spaces of Economic Interaction Between the »Socialist Camp« and the »Global South«," in *Between East and South: Spaces of Interaction in the Globalizing Economy of the Cold War*, eds. Anna Calori, Anne-Kristin Hartmetz, Bence Kocsev, and Jan Zofka (Berlin: De

The latter is not only the most popular among the related interpretations emerging in recent years, but it has also met with a favourable critical response.[5] At the same time, as we have seen, of all the concepts describing state socialist globalization in Eastern Europe, it is the most elaborately discussed in the research literature. This approach brings a radically new narrative and has fundamental implications for the interpretation of East Central European globalization, including the dynamics, chronology, and numerous other dimensions of the process. All this justifies a closer examination of the content and plausibility of this concept in relation to East Central Europe, but the study of this region also provides lessons for the globalization of the entire Eastern Bloc.

Such an analysis is complicated by the fact that the notion of 'alternative globalization' appears in the literature and in the broader discourse in more than one sense. Sometimes, it carries a political meaning. In these cases, 'alternative globalization', also known as 'alter-globalization' or 'the global justice movement, refers to various social movements that seek global cooperation and interaction in order to resist the negative effects of what they consider neoliberal globalization.[6] Even within the specific academic context of post-World War II state socialist countries, the term is employed rather inconsistently, even by the same authors on occasion. The ambiguity of the usage is reflected by the question marks that often appear after the concept 'alternative globalization' in the titles and

Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2019), 5; Marcia C. Schenck, Immanuel R. Harisch, Anne Dietrich, and Eric Burton, "Introduction: Moorings and (Dis)Entanglements Between Africa and East Germany During the Cold War," in *Navigating Socialist Encounters: Moorings and (Dis)Entanglements Between Africa and East Germany During the Cold War*, eds. Eric Burton, Anne Dietrich, Immanuel Harisch, and Marcia Schenck (Munich: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2021), 10.

[5] James Robertson, "The Socialist World in the Second Age of Globalization: An Alternative History?," *Markets, Globalization and Development Review* 3, no. 2 (2018): 1–7; Jun Fujisawa, "Alternative Globalizations: Eastern Europe and the Postcolonial World," *Hungarian Historical Review* 10, no. 1 (2021): 184–187; Jelena Đureinović, "Book Review: Alternative Globalizations: Eastern Europe and the Postcolonial World," *Studies of Transition States and Societies* 12, no. 1 (2020): 90–91; Markus Sattler, "Book Review: Alternative Globalizations. Eastern Europe and the Postcolonial World," *Eurasian Geography and Economics* 62, no. 5–6 (2021): 772–775.

[6] Arun Kumar Pokhrel, "Alterglobalization," in *Encyclopedia of Global Justice*, ed. Deen K. Chatterjee (Dordrecht: Springer, 2011), 30–35; Luke Martell, "Alternative Globalization," in *Research Handbook on the Sociology of Globalization*, eds. Christian Karner and Dirk Hofäcker (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2023), 217–224.

subtitles of publications addressing this issue. Authors recurrently interpret 'alternative globalization' as a political and economic programme, i.e., the not necessarily realized aspiration of the state socialist countries, to achieve a form of globalization other than that led by the West. Furthermore, it has also been proposed that "the notion of alternative globalization suggests a critical rethinking of the history of Western-centred globalization in which events and actors in other parts of the world actually play an important role".[7] In other words, in this case, the concept denotes a historiographical programme.

However, as we have seen in an earlier chapter, there is also a growing perception that alternative globalization has been achieved, that is, that the Eastern European state socialist countries have managed, at least for certain periods, to create their own globalization, which, as an eminent exponent of the concept, James Mark argues, came to an end in the 1980s and 1990s.[8]

Given the uncertainty in the use of the terminology, it seems to be useful to explore the meaning of the adjective 'alternative'. The term 'alternative' may imply any one of several meanings: it may simply indicate that something is different from the usual in terms of its characteristics; it may also refer to mutual exclusivity, along with parallelism; or it may denote substitution. Interpreting the concept in the context of globalization, the first option can be ruled out, since if 'alternative' only means that the globalization process in Eastern Europe showed particular characteristics, then the term loses its analytical power and serves no purpose other than to attract attention. The second option, mutual exclusivity of the globalization process in Eastern Europe and in other parts of the world cannot be supported empirically. The Eastern European state socialist countries maintained relations with each other as well as with the Global South and the Western countries. These relations were far from symmetrical in most areas, but they cannot be regarded as mutually exclusive. Rather, the global connections of the Eastern European region and the West or other world regions were quite entangled, as demonstrated by

[7] Péter Apor, "Az alternatív globalizációról," in *Globalizáció Kelet-Közép-Európában a második világháború után: narratívák és ellennarratívák*, ed. Béla Tomka (Pécs: Kronosz, 2023), 111.

[8] James Mark suggests the 'end of alternative globalization' in the 1980s and 1990s. James Mark, "The End of Alternative Spaces of Globalization? Transformations from the 1980s to the 2010s," in *Between East and South*, 217.

research.[9] In fact, many of the contributions of the revisionist direction of research argue for the existence of worldwide interconnections.[10] For similar reasons, it is also hardly plausible to assume that the state socialist countries of Eastern Europe were involved in one of several globalization processes running in parallel. This leaves us with the fourth possible interpretation: the Eastern European state socialist countries were able to build new international relationships to compensate for the shortcomings of their existing connections with the Western world and with many other world regions. Indeed, this is an idea that often surfaces in the works committed to the revisionist approach.

With the accelerating disintegration of the colonial system from the 1950s onwards, many political leaders and other decision-makers as well as numerous academics and cultural figures in the Eastern European countries believed that their countries could establish international relations with the Third World that could substitute for their restrained links with the Western countries. The Global South also embraced the idea that mutually beneficial cooperation could be established with Eastern Europe, replacing former colonial powers. Within the framework of these visions, such new relationships could have driven rapid technological development and, above all, industrialization in the former colonial countries, while providing the state socialist countries with markets and raw materials, as well as military and geopolitical leverage.[11]

Against this background, several of the revisionist accounts offer rich descriptions of a wide range of links between the socialist countries and the developing world. These are important research findings which show that previous interpretations of the international relations of the Eastern

[9] Simo Mikkonen and Pia Koivunen, eds., *Beyond the Divide: Entangled Histories of Cold War Europe* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2015); Shalini Randeria and Andreas Eckert, "Geteilte Globalisierung," in *Vom Imperialismus zum Empire. Nicht-westliche Perspektiven auf Globalisierung*, Hg. Shalini Randeria and Andreas Eckert (Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp, 2015), 9–33.

[10] James Mark, Bogdan C. Iacob, Tobias Rupprecht, and Ljubica Spaskovska, *1989: A Global History of Eastern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019); Mark, Kalinovsky, and Mahrung, eds., *Alternative Globalizations*; James Mark and Paul Betts, eds., *Socialism Goes Global: The Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in the Age of Decolonization* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022).

[11] Deepak Nayyar, "Economic Relations Between Socialist and Third World Countries: An Introduction," in *Economic Relations Between Socialist Countries and the Third World*, ed. Deepak Nayyar (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1977), 1–17.

European socialist states have in many ways exaggerated the extent of the region's isolation. However, the revisionist studies are mainly concerned with specific areas of politics and culture, and draw mostly upon the ideas of, and encounters between, members of the political leadership and higher echelons of culture. From this point of view, it is symptomatic that the chapter on development projects for the Third World in the volume *Socialism Goes Global*, arguably the most comprehensive and systematic contribution of the revisionist approach, mainly describes development-related political and academic plans and visions, with little reference to the everyday, down-to-earth implementation of those development ideas; in fact, no attempt is made to explore the significance of the development projects that were actually implemented.[12] The revisionist studies are thus often confined to presenting the intentions and claims rather than the realities of global connections; not only is there no assessment of the weight of the economic, cultural, and other links between the Second and Third World, but the exploration of the actual extent to which these factors affected individual Eastern European societies is also lacking.

Recent research has abundantly documented the limitations of the Third World's relations with the state socialist countries, and these results are also confirmed by all the findings of our research in all the areas studied, from information flows to tourism. The real magnitude of such linkages is all the more crucial because the socialist countries of Eastern Europe only established closer relations with a relatively small number of developing countries, namely the so-called countries of socialist orientation, such as Angola, Mozambique, and South Yemen. It is therefore not surprising that their economic ties with the Third World only marginally contributed to globalization; the total volume of trade between all European socialist countries and the Global South never exceeded 1% of world

[12] Eric Burton, James Mark, and Steffi Mahrung, "Development," in *Socialism Goes Global*, 75–114.

trade.[13] Nor can the relationship be considered central for the developing world as a whole, as is illustrated by the development of aid policy. In the 1980s, development assistance from all socialist countries to the Third World amounted to about one-tenth of the total value of aid those countries received from the West.[14]

The expansion and deepening of the new international relations were hampered by a number of factors rooted in the state socialist system. After initial high expectations, it quickly became clear that those in control of the Eastern European economies typically saw the countries of the Global South as a market for low-quality goods and services, with little regard for local needs.[15] A case in point, for instance, is the policy of a Soviet locomotive company that fulfilled an order from Africa by also sending a snowplough along with the locomotive, as was the procedure for domestic deliveries. The main reason for this inflexibility was the centrally controlled economic system. In other cases, ideological constraints led to adverse outcomes: Eastern European politicians and military advisers, based on Marxist revolutionary ideology, often tended to escalate local armed conflicts rather than promoting peaceful settlements.

Professionals arriving in developing countries from Eastern Europe tended to be isolated from the local population and showing patronizing

[13] Marie Lavigne, *The Economics of Transition: From Socialist Economy to Market Economy* (New York: Macmillan, 1995), 79; on aid and developmental assistance, see also Sara Lorenzini, "Comecon and the South in the Years of Détente: A Study on East–South Economic Relations," *European Review of History/Revue européenne d'histoire* 21, no. 2 (2014): 183–199; Corinna R. Unger, *International Development: A Postwar History* (London: Bloomsbury, 2018); Stephen J. Macekura and Erez Manela, eds., *The Development Century: A Global History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018); David C. Engerman, *The Price of Aid: The Economic Cold War in India* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018); Artemy M. Kalinovsky, "Sorting Out the Recent Historiography of Development Assistance: Consolidation and New Directions in the Field," *Journal of Contemporary History* 56, no. 1 (2021): 227–239; Sara Lorenzini, *Global Development: A Cold War History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019).

[14] Lavigne, *The Economics of Transition: From Socialist Economy to Market Economy*, 80. From the 1960s onwards, the Eastern European state socialist countries themselves considered it less and less their task to provide economic aid to the socialist-oriented countries of the Third World. For more on this, see László Csaba, *Eastern Europe in the World Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 127–129.

[15] Lorenzini, "Comecon and the South in the Years of Détente," 183–199.

attitudes towards their local partners. As one author puts it, "the expatriate communities were often insular and claustrophobic."[16] There was little sincere openness to local culture: for example, Hungarian engineers working in Algeria were more interested in learning about the French mores and way of life than the local culture.[17] For most people from state socialist Eastern Europe, the incentive for working in the Global South was purely economic: the opportunity to earn higher wages in hard currency and purchase Western goods, so that upon returning home they could achieve better living conditions.[18] In many ways, the relationship emerging between the local population and their Eastern European partners replicated those existing between the colonial countries and their former colonizers.

The links of East Central Europe and, more broadly, Eastern Europe to the Global South had little impact on the internationalization of these societies and their social conditions as a whole. As we have seen in the previous chapter, relatively few people travelled to and visited the Global South through these connections. Relations outside the government administration and officially recognized bodies were also limited in other respects; it is symptomatic that Poland's Solidarity movement maintained very few links to the Global South in the 1980s, and the existing relations were largely shaped by the movement's Western allies.[19] Just as East Central European professionals working in the developing world tended to live in isolation, the same was true of Third World workers and, to a lesser extent, students working and studying in East Central Europe. For example, even though the mission of the boarding schools for Korean refugee children in Eastern Europe in the early 1950s was to integrate

[16] Kristin Roth-Ey, "Introduction," in *Socialist Internationalism and the Gritty Politics of the Particular: Second-Third World Spaces in the Cold War*, ed. Kristin Roth-Ey (London: Bloomsbury, 2023), 10.

[17] Zsombor Bódy, "Opening Up to the "Third World" or Taking a Detour to the "West"? The Hungarian Presence in Algeria from the 1960s to the 1980s," *Comparativ* 33, no. 3 (2023): 377–399.

[18] Mikuláš Pešta, "The Expert Community: Expert Knowledge and Socialist Virtues–Czechoslovak Military Specialists in the Global South," in *Socialist Internationalism and the Gritty Politics of the Particular*, 150–155.

[19] Kim Christiaens and Idesbald Goddeeris, "Competing Solidarities? Solidarność and the Global South During the 1980s," in *Alternative Globalizations: Eastern Europe and the Postcolonial World*, 288–310.

Korean children into local communities, in reality, boarding schools both nurtured and enforced children's separation from those communities.[20]

The very institutional system set up to facilitate the new international relations proved to be a barrier to expanding them at scale. The links of the state socialist countries with the Global South were predominantly based on bilateral intergovernmental agreements or agreements between government and party organizations.[21] These agreements left no room for the initiatives and the free movement of citizens or the autonomous decisions of economic actors, which would have served to make the global networks denser. Kristin Roth-Ey's conclusion therefore seems plausible, indicating that "[t]he overwhelming majority of people in the Second World did not have direct, personal experience of the global in any way; they did not move beyond socialist borders in societies where mobility was tightly bound to privilege; they were not physically connected in a culture that glamorized the connected. For them, the experience of the global was, if anything, a mediated experience […]."[22]

In view of the foregoing, the revisionist interpretations do not convincingly demonstrate that the Eastern Bloc's relations with the Third World adequately made up for the missing links in other relations.[23] It is, therefore, doubtful whether the concept of 'alternative globalization' adequately reflects the globalization process emerging in state socialist Europe.

More general considerations also argue against the use of this concept. Globalization in Eastern Europe was clearly linked to the general trends of globalization. As elsewhere in the world, its determinants included technological developments, especially in transport and telecommunications. These areas were largely transformed by innovations from the Western world; the Eastern European state socialist societies were not able to find 'alternative' paths of technological development that stimulated globalization, but largely adopted innovations from the Western world, as in the case of the television and the container. Moreover, it seems implausible

[20] Péter Apor, "The School: Schools as Liminal Spaces—Integrating North Korean Children Within Socialist Eastern Europe, 1951–9," in *Socialist Internationalism and the Gritty Politics of the Particular*, 21–38.

[21] Roth-Ey, "Introduction," 14.

[22] Roth-Ey, "Introduction," 7.

[23] Béla Tomka, "Globalization in Socialist Eastern Europe: A Turn in Research and Its Discontents," *European History Quarterly* 53, no. 4 (2023): 685–696.

to interpret globalization as a phenomenon comprising a set of distinct elements largely isolated from one another, as the notion of globalization would lose much of its analytical power. This notion can only be a useful addition to the conceptual toolbox for understanding social relations if it has a distinctive focus on shared experiences, transplanetary flows, and interdependence. In this sense, the very nature of globalization implies that its various dimensions are thoroughly interwoven, and that the activities of its diverse actors are rather intertwined. It is therefore implausible to conceptualize globalization as a process that can be divided into parts. Instead, the focus should be on the extent to which different entities are involved in the same process.

On the basis of the results presented in the previous chapter and the observations just made, East Central European state socialist globalization cannot be seen as an alternative process; it is instead appropriate to take a different approach. For our part, we would stress above all the selectivity and the unevenness of the process. In this context, 'selectivity' focuses on making choices or preferences concerning globalization, while 'unevenness' emphasizes the lack of uniformity or the presence of disparities in the process. The two terms are related in the sense that selectivity in making choices can lead to unevenness in the outcomes of globalization. However, as indicated earlier, we do not consider East Central European globalization the sole outcome of the decisions of local actors.

While globalization, in general, exhibits uneven dynamics across its various aspects, this was particularly pronounced in the case of the changes unfolding under state socialism. Firstly, the process was uneven in geographical terms. On the one hand, the relations connecting the countries of the region with one another and with the Soviet Union widened greatly, and their links with certain Third World countries became much more extensive than ever before. This expansion was partly the result of general trends that also affected other parts of the world. Beyond the advancements in transport and communication mentioned earlier, economic growth and the increasing complexity of the economy further fuelled the demand for raw materials and other products that often could be sourced from distant locations. The preferential treatment of specific regions and countries was also motivated by obvious political considerations. On the other hand, as we have observed, relations in several other directions were limited and characterized by very uneven development. This was particularly true for the Western states, but also for many countries of the Global South.

Secondly, the course of globalization over time was equally uneven. The Eastern European state socialist countries initially participated only moderately in the post-World War II boom of global trade, as they tended to pursue either internal self-sufficiency or self-sufficiency at the COMECON level. In the course of time, however, they gradually opened up.

This change took place at different speeds and to different degrees in the different state socialist countries, which is a third manifestation of the unevenness already identified in other aspects. Focusing our observations on the East Central European countries, Poland and Hungary were much more open to international economic-financial institutions and international economic cooperation in general in the 1970s and 1980s than Czechoslovakia.

Fourthly, the unevenness was also strongly prevalent in the various dimensions of globalization. In some areas of the economy, culture, and politics, the international connections of the state socialist countries were considerable and grew more or less continuously after the mid-1950s. Popular culture is a case in point. Western popular music, in particular, attracted a wide audience in the region from the 1960s onwards, but it also inspired many local performers of jazz, pop, rock, and other genres. Other expressions of Western youth culture, ranging from hairstyles and fashion to sexual behaviour, were also diffused relatively widely.[24] The spread of Western popular culture generated opposition and resistance in the state socialist countries, especially, but not exclusively, from representatives of the official ideology. This often took the form of a generational divide, although these conflicts had more or less subsided by the 1980s.[25] Isolated but spectacular global transfers also took place in some economic sectors: Hungarian collective farms, for example, imported complete

[24] William Jay Risch, "Only Rock 'n' Roll? Rock Music, Hippies, and Urban Identities in Lviv and Wrocław, 1965–1980," in *Youth and Rock in the Soviet Bloc: Youth Cultures, Music, and the State in Russia and Eastern Europe*, ed. William Jay Risch (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2014), 81–99; Sándor Horváth, "The Making of the Gang: Consumers of the Socialist Beat in Hungary," in *Youth and Rock in the Soviet Bloc*, 101–115; Anne E. Gorsuch and Diane P. Koenker, eds., *The Socialist Sixties: Crossing Borders in the Second World* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2013).

[25] Ádám Ignácz, "Propagated, Permitted or Prohibited? State Strategies to Control Musical Entertainment in the First Two Decades of Socialist Hungary," in *Popular Music in Eastern Europe: Breaking the Cold War Paradigm*, ed. Ewa Mazierska (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 31–49.

American machine complexes and technologies and successfully adapted them to local conditions.[26]

In contrast, global links displayed only moderate dynamics in terms of travel, migration, or access to information and consumer goods. An illustration of this is the availability of branded and high-quality Western consumer products, such as chocolates, cigarettes, cosmetics, and tape recorders. Usually, these products could only be bought on the black market or at exclusive shops for privileged individuals, such as athletes, people receiving hard currency from relatives living abroad, and party officials.[27]

In interpreting the state socialist globalization of Eastern Europe, focusing on the uneven and selective nature of the process has several advantages beyond drawing attention to the defining feature of globalization in this region. First and foremost, it recognizes that the globalization of the Eastern European state socialist countries was intense in certain dimensions and at certain times. Thus, it is able to bridge the gap between earlier approaches that focused on the isolation of the Eastern European countries, essentially neglecting their globalization and the more recent revisionist trends of research that draw conclusions about the overall globalization of Eastern Europe on the basis of intense changes in certain dimensions and directions of globalization. The proposed approach is also consistent with several demands made by researchers concerning the interpretation of globalization in Eastern Europe.[28] Hence, it does not consider globalization as a unilateral and all-encompassing process initiated and only shaped by the capitalist West. Moreover, it includes Eastern European agency by recognizing that state socialist countries also had their own policy preferences. This interpretation not only acknowledges that globalization occurred in the region under state socialism with a

[26] Zsuzsanna Varga, *The Hungarian Agricultural Miracle? Sovietization and Americanization in a Communist Country* (Lanham: Lexington, 2021), 201–212.

[27] Paulina Bren, "Tuzex and the Hustler: Living It Up in Czechoslovakia," in *Communism Unwrapped: Consumption in Cold War Eastern Europe*, ed. Paulina Bren and Mary Neuburger (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 27–48; Béla Tomka, *Austerities and Aspirations: A Comparative History of Growth, Consumption and Quality of Life in East Central Europe Since 1945* (Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2020), 173–174; Annina Gagyiova, *Vom Gulasch zum Kühlschrank. Privater Konsum zwischen Eigensinn und Herrschaftssicherung im sozialistischen Ungarn, 1956–1989* (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz, 2020), 112–123.

[28] Calori, Hartmetz, Kocsev and Zofka, "Alternative Globalizatons?" 1–31.

considerable intensity in some areas and during some periods, but is also able to track the dynamics of the process. In addition, it has an advantage over the concept of 'alternative globalization' in that it is fully compatible with the prevailing definitions of globalization, which emphasize the specific elements of global flows, interdependence between different parts of the world, and increased awareness of these processes.[29] This is much less the case for the concept of 'alternative globalization', which cannot account for the notion of a deepening global interdependence.

[29] For similar definitions, see Robert J. Holton, *Making Globalization* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 14–15; Roland Robertson, *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture* (London: Sage, 1992), 8.

CHAPTER 4

The Role of 1989: Dedramatization at Its Extreme?

Abstract This chapter focuses on the role of the year 1989 in the globalization of East Central Europe, a pivotal theme in related debates. Contrary to claims in recent literature that refer to 1989 as a 'deglobalizing moment', this study provides evidence that regime changes played a crucial role in fostering globalization in the region. Globalization in East Central Europe progressed slowly after Stalinism, but 1989 marked a breakthrough in this respect, affecting most social, economic, and cultural spheres significantly. Following this watershed moment, both foreign direct investment and the activities of transnational corporations increased dramatically. The same clear pattern can be demonstrated regarding the region's integration into the global telecommunications network. Moreover, the regime changes catalysed a substantial surge in international travel to and from the region, including intercontinental journeys. East Central Europe emerged as an important hub and destination within the international migration network, even though in terms of migration, globalization in the region after the regime changes was significantly less dynamic, especially when compared to other aspects of globalization in the region, and the trajectory observed in Western European countries.

Keywords Globalization · Eastern Europe · East Central Europe · Post-war era · State socialism · 1989 · Regime changes · Post-communism

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The revisionist approach to the globalization of state socialist Eastern Europe casts new light on the role of 1989 in this process. As we have seen earlier, in addition to reassessing the link between the breakdown of the state socialist system and the process of globalization, some authors argue that the region's global integration in fact declined after the regime changes. This line of interpretation therefore transcends state socialist globalization and also makes explicit claims about the region's development after 1989. All this warrants a separate discussion of the subject, in addition to what has been said on this issue so far.

The great historical significance of the regime changes in Eastern Europe and the related symbolic importance of the year 1989 are self-evident to most observers. Ágnes Heller called the collapse of communism a "great turning point" in history, while Jacques Rupnik suggested that "it may have been the last time Europe constituted the centre-stage of a world event", that is, became a significant factor in world history, because the "centre of gravity" has since been shifting eastward.[1] Many comprehensive historical works also interpreted this period as a watershed moment. Eric Hobsbawm's famous synthesis is an early example. In his view, the Eastern European regime changes marked the end of the "short twentieth century". Since then, many other historical analyses have also seen 1989, or other years of regime changes, as the end or the beginning of a historical era.[2] Just to refer to a few examples, Martin Conway and his fellow authors chose 1989 as their starting point for writing the history of the continent in reverse chronological order, treating the post-1989 period as a completely different era; Philipp Ther started his own history of Europe from this point in time.[3]

[1] Ágnes Heller, "Twenty Years After 1989," in *The End and the Beginning. The Revolutions of 1989 and the Resurgence of History*, eds. Vladimir Tismăneanu and Bogdan C. Iacob (Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2012), 55; Jacques Rupnik, "The World After 1989 and the Exhaustion of Three Cycles," in *1989 as a Political World Event: Democracy, Europe and the New International System in the Age of Globalization*, ed. Jacques Rupnik (London and New York: Routledge, 2014), 7.

[2] Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914–1991* (London: Abacus, 1995).

[3] Martin Conway, "Introduction: Reading 1989 Backwards," in *Europe's Postwar Periods—1989, 1945, 1918: Writing History Backwards*, eds. Martin Conway, Pieter Lagrou and Henry Rousso (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 1–7; Philipp Ther, *Die neue Ordnung auf dem alten Kontinent: Eine Geschichte des neoliberalen Europa* (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2014). For the updated English version, see Philip Ther, *Europe Since 1989:*

However, more recently, several commentators have questioned whether the regime changes really represented such a strong historical divide in Eastern Europe.[4] The increasing distance in time tends to relativize the break of 1990 and doubts have been raised about the scope of its reach and about the validity of the main narratives associated with it. The recent history of Eastern Europe is often regarded to be less a continuation of the authoritarian era and more a prelude to the present-day problems.[5] Many doubt the extent to which the goals widely accepted at the time of the regime changes—such as the establishment of the rule of law—were achieved in post-communist Europe, and, in particular, in such parts of the region as Hungary. One feels less assured today than two decades ago that the period after the fall of the Berlin Wall should be understood as a third wave of democratization, as Samuel Huntington claimed in his 1991 book.[6] Some argue that the generally accepted view regarding the triple transition needs to be modified, since marketization, democratization, and the establishment of civil society are not inevitably connected to one another.[7]

A History (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016). Other examples for this line of argumentation: Stephen Kotkin, *Armageddon Averted: The Soviet Collapse, 1970–2000* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 2; Alan Greenspan, *The Age of Turbulence* (New York: Penguin, 2007), 12. For considering the significance of East European the regime changes in a global context, see also Matthias Middell, "1989," in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Communism*, ed. Stephen A. Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 171–184; for the significance of 1989 in Africa, see Ulf Engel, "Africa's '1989'," in *1989 in Global Perspective*, eds. Ulf Engel, Frank Hadler, and Matthias Middell (Leipzig: Leipzig University Press, 2015), 331–348.

[4] Jennifer L. Allen, "Against the 1989–1990 Ending Myth," *Central European History* 52, no. 1 (2019): 125–147; George Lawson, "Introduction: The 'What', 'When' and 'Where' of the Global 1989," in *The Global 1989: Continuity and Change in World Politics*, eds. George Lawson, Chris Armbruster, and Michael Cox (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Martin Sabrow, "1990: An Epochal Break in German History?," *Bulletin of the German Historical Institute* 60, Spring (2017): 31–42.

[5] Sabrow, "1990: An Epochal Break in German History?," 39.

[6] Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991).

[7] Claus Offe, "Capitalism by Democratic Design? Facing the Triple Transition in East Central Europe," *Social Research* 58, no. 4 (1991): 865–892. For similar argument, see Philipp Ther, "Groping in the Dark: Expectations and Predictions, 1988–1991," in *From Revolution to Uncertainty: The Year 1990 in Central and Eastern Europe*, eds. Wlodzimierz Borodziej, Stanislav Holubec, and Joachim von Puttkamer (Abingdon, Oxon and New York, NY: Routledge, 2019), 20.

What is certainly a remarkable development, however, is that the dedramatization of the regime changes in Eastern Europe has also found its way into the field of globalization research. As we have seen, it has been suggested that the regime changes did not make Eastern Europe significantly more globalized, and 1989 can even be interpreted as a 'de-globalizing moment'.[8] The relevant argument is that globalization in Eastern Europe was much stronger than previously assumed, which can be traced back particularly to the extensive relations the region established with the Global South. However, from the 1970s onwards, a shift occurred in this respect: the Eastern European region rearranged its orientation from the Global South to the West. As a result, the extent of its globalization actually decreased, a problem very much related to the issue of alternative globalization as discussed above. Furthermore, it has been also argued that Eastern Europe's complete reorientation towards the West occurring at the time of the regime changes was a choice made by the Eastern European elites as to the nature of the globalization to be pursued.

Questioning the pivotal role of 1989 in the process of Eastern European globalization seems difficult to support with comprehensive empirical evidence, just as the interpretation of 1989 as a 'de-globalizing moment' cannot be supported by comprehensive empirical evidence. Our results show that while the process of globalization certainly advanced in the East Central European region in the 1970s and 1980s, 1989 clearly marked a breakthrough. This can be seen in foreign trade and the extraordinary growth both in FDI and in the activity of transnational corporations, actors often considered the main drivers of globalization. In this respect, countries of the region soon outpaced other societies with

[8] James Mark, Bogdan C. Iacob, Tobias Rupprecht, and Ljubica Spaskovska, *1989: A Global History of Eastern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 30; James Mark, Artemy M. Kalinovsky, and Steffi Mahrung, eds., *Alternative Globalizations: Eastern Europe and the Postcolonial World* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 2020); James Mark and Paul Betts, eds., *Socialism Goes Global: The Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in the Age of Decolonization* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022); for a similar but less explicit example of the thesis, see Cristian Nae, "A Porous Iron Curtain: Artistic Contacts and Exchanges Across the Eastern European Bloc During the Cold War (1960–1980)," in *Art History in a Global Context: Methods, Themes, and Approaches*, eds. Ann Albritton and Gwen Farrelly (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2020), 13–26; for further references see Chapter 1.

a similar level of economic development and even several more economically advanced countries, such as neighbouring Austria as well. Similar processes took place in the field of telecommunications. Although the hierarchy of the global telecommunications system was generally very stable in the 1990s, the position of the East Central European societies in this network changed: they migrated towards the centre. Moreover, a wealth of data confirms that after 1989, there was a dramatic surge in international travel and visits to the region, and while the boom was mainly seen in travel within the continent, the number of visits beyond Europe also multiplied. East Central Europe also became an important node and, for the first time, a destination in its own right within the international migration network.

These findings are supported by a number of other analyses, including the most respected globalization indices, such as the KOF Globalisation Index or the Maastricht Globalisation Index (MGI). These composite indicators cover politics, society, economics, and culture and employ data on diverse aspects such as the number of foreign or foreign-born residents, the number of airports that offer at least one international flight connection, and the number of international bilateral or multilateral treaties signed by the country.[9] The indices are mostly available for the last few decades, wherefore they are not really suitable for long-term analysis; however, they do cover the period of regime changes in East Central Europe. The measures demonstrate that the level of globalization of the East Central European countries increased significantly after the regime changes. After 1989, they were among the fastest globalizing countries of the world, and, as a consequence, the countries of the region reached a high level of globalization by the second decade of the twenty-first century even in international comparison.[10]

[9] For the globalization indices, see Axel Dreher, Noel Gaston, and Pim Martens, *Measuring Globalisation: Gauging Its Consequences* (New York: Springer, 2008); Pim Martens, Marco Caselli, Philippe De Lombaerde, Lukas Figge, and Jan Aart Scholte, "New Directions in Globalization Indices," *Globalizations* 12, no. 2 (2015): 217–228.

[10] Savina Gygli, Florian Haelg, Niklas Potrafke, and Jan-Egbert Sturm, "The KOF Globalisation Index—Revisited," *Review of International Organizations* 14, no. 3 (2019): 543–574. For the Maastricht Globalisation Index (MGI), see Pim Martens and M. Raza, *An Updated Maastricht Globalisation Index*, Working Paper 08020 (Maastricht: ICIS, 2008). Lukas Figge and Pim Martens, "Globalisation Continues: The Maastricht Globalisation Index Revisited and Updated," *Globalizations* 11, no. 6 (2014): 6. For the

The dynamics of globalization in East Central Europe after the regime changes can mainly be explained by developments within the region. However, the 1980s saw the start of global processes that also had a significant impact on East Central Europe's international connections. This new era, also referred to as hyperglobalization, has seen a major increase in the dynamics of globalization, mainly as a result of breakthroughs in information and communication technologies, the opening up of China and several Third World countries to the world economy, and the decisions of a number of governments to embrace free trade.[11] Alongside internal changes in East Central Europe, this acceleration of globalization also helped to increase the region's international embeddedness. Hyperglobalization affected all regions of the world even if in varying degrees; consequently, the fact that it coincided with the fall of state socialism in Europe further undermines the plausibility of the thesis about the declining level of globalization in Eastern Europe after 1989.

A further remarkable claim appearing in the revisionist literature about the role of regime changes is that after 1989, Eastern European elites decided to adopt a new form of globalization; in other words, the reorientation towards Western-centred globalization was a conscious decision adopted by the local elites.[12] The authors advancing this argument interpret globalization as a project, and thus, in our view, obscure the mechanisms through which globalization proceeds.[13] Political and economic decision-making was undoubtedly highly centralized in the state socialist countries; hence, their participation in the globalization process was also often highly controlled. At the same time, globalization is also determined by a number of factors, such as technological change, that no single country, group of countries, or other actors can

variables of the KOF Index, see https://kof.ethz.ch/en/forecasts-and-indicators/indicators/kof-globalisation-index.html, accessed 12 September 2023.

[11] Dani Rodrik, *The Globalization Paradox: Democracy and the Future of the World Economy* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2011); Arvind Subramanian and Martin Kessler, "The Hyperglobalization of Trade and Its Future," in *Towards a Better Global Economy: Policy Implications for Citizens Worldwide in the Twenty-First Century*, Franklin Allen et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 216–277.

[12] Mark, Iacob, Rupprecht, and Spaskovska, *1989: A Global History of Eastern Europe*, 30.

[13] James Mark, Artemy M. Kalinovsky, and Steffi Marung, "Introduction," in *Alternative Globalizations: Eastern Europe and the Postcolonial World*, eds. James Mark, Artemy Kalinovsky, and Steffi Marung (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2020), 3–6.

fundamentally influence.[14] Accordingly, the state socialist countries and their elites only had partial choices in the course of globalization and were unable to manage their participation in it in a controlled, project-like manner. Moreover, it is also not self-evident how fragmented groups of elites across such a vast region can make shared decisions about their positions on globalization and enforce them.

Even more importantly, the proposition of a conscious decision on the type of globalization greatly overestimates the choices available to the East Central European societies around the time of the regime changes. In the late 1980s, the developmental paths of the region were severely constrained. Experts of the centrally controlled economies, such as János Kornai, clearly demonstrated that uncompetitive firms, a severe lack of capital, ineffective economic institutions, low levels of social capabilities, and other dire legacies of state socialism left the East Central European, and more broadly, the Eastern European state socialist countries with very few options by the late 1980s.[15] To transform themselves into functioning market economies, they needed to open up to Western companies, the major sources of capital and technology. Consequently, it is highly doubtful that East Central European societies had any meaningful choices in terms of how to embrace globalization after 1989.

Later on, having overcome the transformation crisis, the countries of the region entered a new millennium with more options available to them. However, despite their increasing room to manoeuvre, the countries of the region remained committed to integration into the world economy, mainly by welcoming Western multinationals. This was not coincidental. As their economic convergence with Western Europe after the turn of the millennium has shown, the countries of East Central Europe were among the winners of globalization, and thus there would have been no incentive

[14] Scott Kirsch, "The Incredible Shrinking World? Technology and the Production of Space," *Environment and Planning: Society and Space* 13, no. 5 (1995): 529–555; Gregory Clark and Robert C. Feenstra, "Technology in the Great Divergence," in *Globalization in Historical Perspective*, eds. Michael O. Bordo, Alan M. Taylor, and Jeffrey G. Williamson (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 277–321.

[15] For comprehensive international perspectives on the transformation and its impediments, see János Kornai, "The Great Transformation of Central and Eastern Europe: Success and Disappointment," *Economics in Transition* 14, no. 2 (2006): 207–244; László Csaba, *The New Political Economy of Emerging Europe* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 2005); Tomasz Mickiewicz, *Economics of Institutional Change: Central and Eastern Europe Revisited* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

for them either to seek alternatives or to opt out of globalization even if these options had been available.[16]

In addition to the effects of the aforementioned revolutionary transformation of information and communication technologies, the preferences of broader segments of East Central European societies should not be underestimated either. The desire for the freedom of movement and information and the yearning for access to consumer and cultural goods were all factors that encouraged broad sections of these societies, and not just their elites, to seek Western links and to embrace, one might say, *realexistierende* globalization.

As we have seen in the historiographical overview, the dedramatization of the regime changes in the process of globalization in East Central Europe and in the broader Eastern Europe has gained a further analytical instrument by the introduction of the notion of 'socialist protoglobalization'. As a brief reminder, the concept proposes that the reform socialism of the 1970s in the East Central European countries led to a significant increase in the number of partnerships with Western firms and this process largely paved the way for the globalization of the region after the regime changes.[17]

This conceptual innovation has met with a favourable critical response.[18] However, the use of the term 'socialist protoglobalization' raises a number of problems beyond the obvious fact that its core concept 'protoglobalization' is already well established in other contexts, especially in the early modern and modern periods, and might therefore lead to misunderstandings.[19] More importantly, the prefix 'proto' is commonly

[16] Béla Tomka, *Austerities and Aspirations: A Comparative History of Growth, Consumption and Quality of Life in East Central Europe Since 1945* (Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2020), 283–286.

[17] Besnik Pula, *Globalization Under and After Socialism: The Evolution of Transnational Capital in Central and Eastern Europe* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2018), 78–83.

[18] Zsuzsa Gille, "Book Review: Globalization Under and After Socialism: The Evolution of Transnational Capital in Central and Eastern Europe," *Contemporary Sociology* 49, no. 1 (2020): 84–85; Jasper P. Simons, "Book Review: Globalization Under and After Socialism: The Evolution of Transnational Capital in Central and Eastern Europe," *Sociologický časopis/Czech Sociological Review* 56, no 3 (2020): 424–427; William Outhwaite, "When Did 1989 End?," *Social Science Information* 59, no. 3 (2020): 425–438.

[19] Martha C. E. Van Der Bly, "Proto-Globalization," in *Encyclopedia of Global Studies. Vol. 3*, eds. Helmut K. Anheier and Mark Juergensmeyer (London: Sage, 2012), 1406–1408; Diego Olstein, "'Proto-globalization' and 'Proto-glocalizations' in the Middle

used in historiography to denote a first, original, or early form of a phenomenon, often in the context of tracing the development or origins of a particular process, political organization, technology, or cultural development. It is in this sense that the prefix has been used to create the concepts of proto-industrialization, proto-renaissance, proto-nationalism, and proto-democracy.[20] Consequently, the concept of 'protoglobalization' can also only be justified if we consider it as the first stage of globalization, or if we date globalization—'real' globalization—from a certain point in time and distinguish a preparatory phase before that time in which globalization had not yet taken place, but certain elements of it had already appeared. Until now, the term 'protoglobalization' has indeed been used in this sense.

Taking this into account, it is difficult to make a case for the application of the concept of 'socialist protoglobalization'. In Eastern Europe, and in the East Central European region in particular, the process of globalization was clearly underway long before the 1970s and 1980s. It is therefore not plausible to insert a phase designated with a label that starts with the prefix 'proto-' right in the middle of an already ongoing process since this procedure fully distorts any sensible periodization of the globalization process seen in the region and beyond. Nor is it conceivable to use the term 'socialist protoglobalization' in the sense that it paved the way for later globalization during socialism, as the 1970s and 1980s represented the last phase of state socialism in Eastern Europe, never to be followed by a subsequent stage of actual 'socialist globalization'.

More substantial considerations also challenge the understanding behind the concept. Contemporary research has already documented that in Eastern nations multiple factors hindered the growth of East–West collaboration. These factors included the limited decision-making authority of the enterprises, constraints forced on them by plan directives, restrictions imposed by foreign trade strategies, specialization decisions made by the COMECON, and non-convertible currencies, as well as

Millennium," in *The Cambridge World History. Vol. V: Expanding Webs of Exchange and Conflict, 500 CE–1500 CE*, eds. Benjamin Z. Kedar and Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 665–684.

[20] For the concept of proto-industrialization, see Sheilagh Ogilvie and Markus Cerman, "The Theories of Proto-industrialization," in *European Proto-industrialization: An Introductory Handbook*, eds. Sheilagh Ogilvie and Markus Cerman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 1–11.

fluctuating price relationships and the resulting difficulties in price calculations.[21] The literature favouring the term 'socialist protoglobalization' does not convincingly demonstrate that the East Central European countries attracted enough foreign capital or technology to significantly transform their economies, or that they were able to achieve such transformation by any other means in the 1970s and 1980s. A major reason for the demise of state socialism was that these countries could not compete in the global economy because they did not have access to the most advanced technologies or could not apply them effectively. Czechoslovakia, in particular, was very weak in this respect, yet it heavily attracted foreign companies to settle in and invest after the regime change. As a result, the link between the supposed protoglobalization of the 1970s and the economic openness of the 1990s cannot be convincingly demonstrated here. All this indicates that the importance of the otherwise existing and expanding East–West business-to-business relations in the 1970s and 1980s is over-interpreted by those advocating the concept of socialist protoglobalization.

Finally, the argumentation behind this approach only deals with the economic aspects and fully neglects other dimensions of globalization, such as the flow of information and the movement of people. Therefore, although it may seem obvious at first, it should be stressed that research must always take into account the multi-dimensionality of globalization: generalizations about the dynamics of the process cannot be derived from economic change alone.

[21] See, Friedrich Levcik and Jan Stankovsky, *Industrial Cooperation Between East and West* (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1979), 228; László Csaba, *A fölemelkedő Európa* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 2006); János Kornai, *From Socialism to Capitalism: Eight Essays* (Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2008), 81–121; Ivan T. Berend: *From the Soviet Bloc to the European Union: The Economic and Social Transformation of Central and Eastern Europe, Since 1973* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 20–38.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusions: Limitations of the Old and New Mainstream Narratives

Abstract While earlier historical interpretations emphasized the relative isolation of European state socialist countries after World War II, a significant body of recent research challenges this view, suggesting instead that these countries were much more global than previously assumed. This line of research claims that their extensive relations with the Global South largely compensated for their muted ties with the West. Revisionist studies also question the impact of regime changes on globalization in the region, emphasizing the continuities between the pre-1989 and the post-communist periods. In this context, the book explores how East Central European state socialist countries fit into the general trend of globalization after World War II, focusing on foreign trade, capital and information flows, and the movement of people. Conceptual problems are also addressed, such as the value of recently introduced terms like 'alternative globalization' and 'socialist protoglobalization' for understanding state socialist globalization. In doing so, the study strikes a balance between traditional and new mainstream interpretations. It acknowledges that East Central European societies experienced significant globalization during the state socialist era. However, based on empirical evidence, this study proposes other notions, including fragmentation, selectivity, and unevenness to conceptualize this process, rather than 'alternative' or 'proto-' globalization.

B. Tomka, *Globalization in State Socialist East Central Europe*,
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Keywords Globalization · Eastern Europe · East Central Europe · Global South · State socialism · Post-war era · 1989 · Regime changes · Post-communism

As demonstrated in the study, a significant thrust of recent historical research has been to thoroughly revise traditional ideas about the globalization of the state socialist countries of Eastern Europe, including those of East Central Europe. One might argue that a new historical canon is emerging on the globalization of post-World War II Eastern Europe since many of the related publications on the subject in recent years have taken up similar positions, even if their emphases often diverge. It has been claimed that this region was much more globalized in the three or four decades following World War II than previously thought. In the new understanding, the structure and patterns of globalization in the region also took on a distinct shape. In particular, relations with the Global South defined the globalization of the European state socialist countries since this process was primarily based on the expansion of East-South connections, which largely compensated for the deficits of the links connecting the Eastern European societies to the Western world. The year 1989 also assumes a new role in globalization: several authors explicitly question whether the regime changes accelerated the globalization of the region, arguing that it was the nature of the region's globalization that changed instead; others question the significance of the regime changes more indirectly, by focusing on the continuity in global relations across the pre- and the post-1989 eras.

Studies aligned with this new understanding of state socialist globalization can boast of several important achievements. They present a more comprehensive picture than ever before of the global engagement of the state socialist countries of Eastern Europe and the evolution of their global commitment over time. Recent research is explicitly productive in delivering a rich and colourful account of Eastern Europe's relations with the Global South, which, for all too long, was a relatively underresearched area. Several contributions also address the reciprocal effects; in doing so, Eastern Europe and the postcolonial world are not only presented as passive recipients in globalization, but also as its shapers. In many respects, therefore, the new, revisionist direction of research may be seen as a successful correction of earlier, often one-sided narratives

on the globalization of the Eastern European state socialist regimes. At the same time, several of the new approaches are also not free from one-sidedness. The imbalances and the over-interpretation of the results are evident in all three areas where the new understandings fundamentally challenge previous research findings: the dynamics of globalization in the Eastern European region, its structure, and the role that regime changes played in it.

The results of this study do not support the new, revisionist narratives. The examination of globalization in three East Central European countries of Poland, Czechoslovakia and its successor states, and Hungary show that, on the whole, the state socialist countries in this region achieved a relatively low level of globalization between World War II and the period of the regime changes, which can be clearly demonstrated by a comparison with Austria, a Western country of comparable size and similar geography. The moderate dynamism is evident in all the aspects surveyed, i.e., trade, capital links, the flow of information, and the movement of people.

At the same time, the claim in the recent literature that the degree of globalization in the region declined in the decade or two before the regime change cannot be empirically verified. On the contrary, the globalization of the three East Central European countries under study advanced slowly but steadily during this period. While the ruptures in internal political transformation and in international political relations are clearly manifest, they are less visible in the surveyed areas of globalization. Despite the serious constraints, the East Central European state socialist countries became more and more integrated into the world economy in the post-war decades; this is reflected in trade and international financial relations, their global connections, and expansions in other respects. This development can also be observed in the flow of information, as well as in the regulation of foreign travel, where slow liberalization began in the East Central European countries from the 1950s onwards, and although this process sometimes came to a halt, there was little evidence of regression. The gradual increase in openness was facilitated by the rising complexity of economies, growing consumer demands, and advancing globalization in the world at large, as well as rapid technological change, such as the spread of new information and communication technologies. Nevertheless, this resulted in only relative openness, and the closed nature of the state socialist regimes persisted throughout in many respects. In addition, from the 1970s onwards, the region also showed

internal divergence in the process of globalization. The international openness of Poland and Hungary clearly increased, while Czechoslovakia's global relations expanded to a lesser extent. The divergence was most evident in the regulation of travel, but similar processes were also taking place in the information and cultural space, as the changes in government control of television broadcasting and in the import of films from non-socialist countries show.

It was not only the moderate intensity, but also the very structure of the external relations of the East Central European state socialist countries that reflected the limits of their globalization. Their global links were highly uneven: in many areas, they restricted contact with the leading capitalist countries that were at the forefront of globalization. The consequences of this are revealed not only in the fact that their foreign trade was for all too long oriented towards COMECON, but also in their position in the global telecommunications network, which even in the 1980s was much less central than that of a number of capitalist countries of comparable size and geographical location.

The extent of the economic and cultural links that the three East Central European countries under study, and Eastern European state socialist countries in general, established with the Global South remained only moderate throughout the period under review. They focused on a relatively small number of developing countries, the so-called socialist-oriented countries. This was one of the reasons why their trade with the Third World represented only a small fraction of world trade. Nor can the relationship be considered central for the Third World as a whole. Both in respect of trade and development assistance to the Third World, the entire region of Eastern Europe greatly lagged behind the Western countries and played only a marginal role in globalization, and, obviously, the contribution of East Central Europe was even less significant. Considered in a broader sense, the cultural links they established with the Global South had little impact on the societies of East Central Europe. Symptomatically, the government-controlled media of the state socialist countries did not cover the Third World any more extensively than the newspapers or television channels of the Western European countries. Moreover, the number of people travelling to or from the Global South was relatively small: there were hardly any tourists from East Central Europe visiting African, Asian, or South American countries during this period. An exception was student exchanges, or, more specifically, the hosting of students from mainly socialist-oriented developing countries, from

which a significant number of students and other professionals visited Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. Therefore, we cannot speak of 'alternative globalization', a concept suggested by revisionist approaches to Eastern European state socialist globalization; the links and flows the East Central European countries established with the Third World could in no way make up for what they missed out on because of their limited or non-existent links with the West.

Instead of 'alternative', the terms 'selective' and 'uneven' seem to have more validity for the conceptualization of what we refer to as state socialist globalization. Focusing on these features of globalization in state socialist East Central Europe can bridge the gap between the earlier approaches that focused on the isolation of East Central Europe, essentially neglecting the globalization of the region, and the more recent revisionist research that tends to draw conclusions about the overall process in the region on the basis of relatively intensive changes in specific aspects and directions of globalization.

Contrary to attempts in the recent literature tending towards revisionism, our study has provided ample evidence of the great significance of the regime changes for the globalization of the East Central European region. Globalization in the region slowly advanced after Stalinism, but 1989 marked a breakthrough in the globalization of most social and economic areas. This is aptly illustrated by the fact that from that watershed moment on, the total FDI as well as the activity of transnational corporations increased dramatically. The same clear trend has been demonstrated in this study with regard to the region's place in the world's telecommunications network; the most striking change in the generally very stable global information exchange system of the 1990s was the shift in the position of the East Central European countries in the global telecommunications network—in effect, their increasing centrality. There is also a wealth of evidence to show that the regime changes catalysed a huge increase in the volume of international travel from and visits to the region, including intercontinental travel. East Central Europe emerged as an important node and a destination in its own right within the international migration network. In this respect, the globalization of the region was notably less dynamic than in other aspects or in what has been observed in West European countries. The interpretation of 1989 as a 'de-globalizing moment' is not supported by any systematic empirical evidence.

All in all, globalization progressed in East Central Europe during the state socialist period, but very unevenly in terms of the specific dimensions, geographical scope, and time, and with limited social impact. The state socialist system shaped globalization patterns in the region to a large extent, but not in line with the recent revisionist interpretations reviewed earlier. In particular, we see no justification for the use of the concept of 'socialist protoglobalization' in reference to the period beginning in the 1970s, since globalization in the region had begun well before that decade—in fact, well before the emergence of state socialism. Moreover, the state socialist period, even in its final decades, failed to prepare companies and society in general for more intense globalization or to facilitate their subsequent adaptation to it. Rather, we see the opposite effect: it was the slow and uneven socialist globalization and the lack of preparedness that determined the patterns of globalization in the region after 1989. Accordingly, the significant reduction of connections to the world economy was one of the main reasons for the collapse of the state socialist economic system. In 1989, the societies of the East Central European region had no meaningful choices or alternatives in terms of how to embrace globalization; their uncompetitive firms, shortage of capital, ineffective economic institutions, and limited social capabilities, as well as a range of other legacies of state socialism severely limited the developmental alternatives of these societies and thus the available choices in terms of how they could participate in globalization after the regime changes. Moreover, the countries of East Central Europe converged on Western Europe economically as well as in living standard after the turn of the millennium, indicating that they greatly benefitted from the opening to the West, and thus there was no justification for them to seek alternatives to Western-led globalization.

The acceleration of the process of globalization in East Central Europe since the 1990s was primarily the result of the political and economic transformation of the region. Nevertheless, that transformation also coincided with the intensification of globalization worldwide, which also affected the region's post-communist transformation. One of the most important tasks for future research on the contemporary history of East Central Europe is to explore the relationship between the economic and social transformation in the region on the one hand and the wider globalization process on the other.

In order to avoid a distorted narrative, research needs to acknowledge the multidimensional nature of globalization; generalizations concerning

the dynamics of globalization cannot be drawn by studying selected aspects of the process, be it economic, political, or cultural. It is also essential to examine the social consequences of globalization in state socialist Europe. Research must therefore go beyond studying contemporary discourse on, and visions of, the region's globalization. It must always probe into the weight and implications of specific elements of globalization in order to determine the impact of globalization not only on the political and cultural elites but also on wider segments of the East Central European societies.

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Index

B. Tomka, *Globalization in State Socialist East Central Europe*,
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