

plight of Croatian emigrants to Brazil who were cheated by emigration agents. Instead of receiving land and tax relief, they had to work like slaves on plantations and were repatriated without a penny at state expense (185–90). Such narratives are a powerful corrective for the many “success stories” emigrants sent home.

The *macro level* describes the migratory movements both within the region and overseas and the global consequences of emigration on the societies of southeastern Europe. More importantly, it analyzes in detail the role of the state in elaborating emigration policies that served best the purpose of nation building. The comparative approach of the politics of emigration in individual countries reveals underlying conceptualizations of the nation and how these changed over time (for example from a territorial notion to a deterritorialized transnational one). It also reveals how closely emigration policies are connected with nationalism and ethnic homogenization strategies. Especially the Yugoslav archives clearly show how states could achieve such homogenization by facilitating the emigration of undesirable ethnic or religious groups, while restricting the emigration of the desirable ones. Finally, the macro level also shows the role of the state in creating a loyal diaspora through emigrant newspapers and associations abroad.

Between the macro-level of state policies and the micro-level of personal experience lies a vast transnational social space populated by shipping companies, emigration agents, local officials, and state bureaucrats mediating between the top and the bottom of the migration process. This is the *meso-level* of analysis and the author illustrates the multiple ways in which this intermediate social space affects both those who migrate and those who stay (7). The volume contains valuable information about the often illegal practices used by shipping companies and their thousands of agents across the region to help prospective migrants to circumvent legal restrictions or simply to exploit them. A showcase was the notorious Greek “padrone” system, whereby Greek emigration agents exploited clientelist relations to recruit under-aged boys for Greek-controlled businesses in the U.S. (shoe-shining and fruit peddling), extorting money from their parents. When the American authorities found out about these illegal practices, the Greek agents simply hired fake fathers in America to meet the boys at their arrival (102–3). The examples from the myriads of intermediaries involved in the migration business since the late 19th century provide strong arguments to show that human trafficking, illegal trade in passports, and exploitation of would-be migrants are not recent phenomena. In fact, as the author argues, illegal practices are a direct consequence of legal restrictions imposed by the state: “It is the state that creates illegal migrants.”

The advantage of the historical approach that structures the book—moving from the first period of mass migration to America until 1914 (Chapters 2–4), to the interwar period (Chapter 5), and then to the specific case of postwar communist Yugoslavia (Chapter 6)—lies in its power to challenge received ideas about the “unprecedented” nature of contemporary migration, as well as the public fears often associated with it.

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“Entwickelter Sozialismus” in Osteuropa. Arbeit, Konsum und Öffentlichkeit.

Ed. Nada Boškovska, Angelika Strobel, and Daniel Ursprung. Berlin: Dunker & Humblot, 2016. 268 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Photographs. Tables. €49.90, paper. doi: 10.1017/slr.2017.98

This edited volume, “*Developed Socialism*” in *Eastern Europe: Labor, Consumption and the Public Sphere*, deals with the period of “developed socialism,” sometimes

also known as “real existing socialism,” a time in which consumers’ choices grew more conspicuous, leisure opportunities became more sophisticated and more subtle forms of coercion replaced overt terror. It focuses on three interrelated themes: labor, consumption and the public sphere, and tries to understand how this period was different from previous ones in the Eastern Bloc and Yugoslavia. The main research question revolves around the issue of whether state socialism as ideology and practice could be transformed in order to cope with new political and social challenges. In their answers to this question, the contributors start out by interrogating several binaries that have long structured the historiography on state socialism. Rather than separating “state institutions” from “society” or “the official” from “the informal” or “the private” from “the public,” they highlight the complex relationship between these spheres caused by multiple entanglements and overlaps.

In his essay Ulf Brunnbauer rejects the concept of “the retreat into the private sphere,” used both by contemporaries and in historical writing, because it implies a separation between a public and a private realm. By looking at employment history across the Eastern Bloc, he argues that the two spheres were highly intertwined because state actors actively shaped the private life of citizens and, vice versa, citizens kept pushing the boundaries of what was considered officially acceptable. As such, in order for the official economy to work and plan requirements to be met despite scarce human and material resources, managers and political decision makers had to allow for the informal use of state resources. Along the same lines, Kirsten Bönker emphasizes that wide-spread TV consumption in the Soviet Union established not only new forms of privacy but also enforced new official discourses about private living. Furthermore, for Julia Obertreis television generated a country-wide communication network that involved ordinary citizens and state officials alike, an exchange that constantly redefined the limits of what was considered appropriate critique to be aired on TV. In doing so, this collection of essays is able to show that state-socialist countries were from the mid-1950s onwards highly dynamic societies.

Whether this ability of state-socialist societies to change during late socialism made the system more stable or, on the contrary, accelerated its dissolution because it emphasized multiple contradictions could not find a consensus among the contributors. While all the essays acknowledged a certain success of the new policies after Stalin’s death, there are considerable differences among the case studies. For instance, Malte Rolf concludes that official festivals in the Brezhnev era were devoid of meaning because the promise of normality and privacy contradicted the officially-staged collective rituals. Ekaterina Emeliantseva Koller’s summary leads to a completely opposite conclusion, namely that public marches on official holidays left enough space for personal input and interpretations for citizens to find their own meaning and perform their more personalized forms of semi-public rituals. In other words, the former sees citizens taking part in these formalized festivals inherited from the Stalin era as a proof for the crisis of late socialism, while the latter does not primarily see alienated citizens and social disintegration, but citizens displaying different lifestyles and proving the adaptability of state socialist ideology to social change. I think both interpretations can be valid depending on the case study. In this sense, this volume cannot settle the long-ongoing debate about how historians should reflect on the last two decades of state socialism, but it provides valuable new empirical information.

Thus, the strength of this volume lies in the diverse and rich case studies. They emphasize first the heterogeneity among state-socialist countries. While Yugoslavia and Hungary were competing for the title of the most “liberal” or “westernized” society in eastern Europe, other countries were less open to political change. Second, they reveal the huge regional differences within the countries. As such, a “closed

town” like Severodvinsk or a prestigious industrial plant operated under different circumstances created a different social reality than the areas and social spaces surrounding them. Besides, generational differences were equally important, as Julia Richers points out by looking at Hungarian society in the era of János Kádár. While the younger generation embraced the new consumerist opportunities, the older generation that actively took part in the 1956 revolution was rather skeptical, regarding them as a distraction to suppress the memory of the uprising. Furthermore, Bönker notes significant gender differences in viewers’ tastes even within one single household.

The essays analyze a great variety of sources ranging from interviews (both historical and contemporary), journal articles, TV shows, caricatures, and survey data. With a few exceptions, however, “official” archival sources are used sparsely. For instance, documents of the various committees for consumption, TV, propaganda, or the standard of living are almost completely missing. This is quite surprising since the volume sets out to document the exchange between state actors and society and to pinpoint the intersections between the two spheres. In this way, it reflects more on how the new consumption and everyday-life policies affected the population and less on how state actors reflected and reacted to the sometimes unexpected societal changes. In sum, however, this volume offers a valuable contribution and provides scholars of eastern Europe a wide array of new and highly original case studies.

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Gegengeschichte: Zweiter Weltkrieg und Holocaust im ostmitteleuropäischen Dissens. Ed. Peter Hallama and Stephan Stach. Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2015. xvi, 294 pp. Notes. Index. Illustrations. Photographs. €29.00, hard bound.

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“Counter-history” under state socialism in east central Europe is the overarching topic explored in this volume edited by Peter Hallama and Stephan Stach. The editors and authors of this volume set out to complicate the narrative that a “return of history” and a “return to memory” took place after the demise of communism in 1989 (9). In fact, history and memory had already been returning from the 1970s onwards through the practice of “counter-history” as a discourse of dissidence in the region. This discourse challenged the “socialist master narrative” in several ways from exposing falsifications and breaking taboos, or shedding light on so-called “blank spots.” In addition, it could provide an alternative interpretation of national history, although “counter-history” did not necessarily imply a wholesale negation or dichotomous contrast to the official version of history, nor was it without its own pitfalls. Rather, it “perverted the legitimizing function of history for the socialist system into its delegitimization and simultaneously became a resource for the legitimization of dissident and oppositional activity” (18).

The volume brings together ten authored chapters dealing with specific themes and manifestations of “counter-history” in East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. The volume’s main topical focus rests on the Second World War and the Holocaust, given the importance of these historical events for the foundation myths of the socialist regimes in the region. Within this framework, one discerns a pattern of “counter-historical” narratives dealing with resistance or victimhood. Two chapters deal with resistance to the Nazis. Christhardt Henschel provides a comparative discussion of how it was presented by the East German and Polish opposition