THE 1989 EAST GERMAN MIGRATION WEST: REPRESENTATIONS OF MIGRANT IDENTITIES AND MIGRATION NARRATIVES IN CZECH, POLISH, AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE PRESS

Beatrice Michalovska, MPhil

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Slavonic Studies
School of Modern Languages and Cultures
College of Arts
University of Glasgow

Supervisors: Dr Mirna Šolić, Dr Jan Čulík, Dr Elwira Grossman

Funded by the John Dumbreck Doctoral Scholarship in Slavonic Studies

May 2023

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Abstract

This interdisciplinary, multilingual, and comparative thesis reconsiders the revolutionary year of 1989 in Europe as a year of migrations which precipitated its dramatic political changes. Instead of falling walls and collapsing state-socialist regimes, it focuses on the neglected topic of the East German migration from the German Democratic Republic (GDR) to the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) via Czechoslovakia and Poland which lasted for six months before it forced the iconic opening of the Berlin Wall. This migration became one of the biggest news stories of 1989, and yet it is a marginal topic in the English, Czech, and Polish language Cold War studies. More specifically, studies on the Czechoslovak and Polish perceptions of migrants' identities and experiences while transiting through these countries on their way west remain a rare academic pursuit. Contrary to the existing scholarship which considered this migration a diplomatic crisis, this study argues that the 1989 East German migration, as any other cross-border movement of individuals, was a multilingual and transnationally narrated news story of various encounters with people, spaces, and state borders. This view criticises the Cold War "superpower" diplomacy and politics as primary analytical lenses in understanding cross-border travel. Instead, insights from historical, migration, and media studies were joined in this comparative analysis of the identity representations of migrating East Germans and the construction of their migration narratives which imbued them with meaning in the selected Czech, Polish, and English language press of that time. Journalistic discussions about migration environments formed the coverage of this process: for various effects, reporters paid attention to the migrant aesthetics, their places of shelter, local practices of hospitality and hostility, functioning of the state borders they crossed, as well as political and ideological pathways socialist reform-minded and hardline states they transited through adopted in attempting to manage this process. Thus, this research reveals three dominant news narratives of the East German migration – it was understood as a (un)desirable step towards the German reunification, as a part of socialist reforms and *perestroika*, and an act of (un/welcome) resistance and dissent against the state-socialist East German regime. These narratives provided meanings to the shifting East German migrant identity representations as "citizens of the GDR", "escapees", "refugees", "newcomers", and "traitors", among others. Selective interpretations of the past both Czechoslovak and Polish societies had with various iterations of the German state and related reflections on the mutual future in a "common European home" were employed to structure those narratives and identity representations. Therefore, this thesis sheds light on the contentious relationships of two central European states in focus with migrations at the time of major ruptures and transitions they themselves were undergoing or were soon engulfed by. It prods the past strategies of migration knowledge formation and offers alternative lenses for understanding not only the end of the Cold War in Europe but also complexities inherent in notions as belonging, protest, and change which contemporary societies continue to navigate with difficulty today.

Acknowledgements

I cannot overstate how important my social and professional networks of support were for the completion of this thesis. My gratitude goes to my thesis supervisors Dr Mirna Šolić, Dr Jan Čulík, and Dr Elwira Grossman for supporting this project during its initial stage as a master's thesis and throughout its doctoral expansion. Their guidance, encouragement, and friendship have been invaluable in inspiring me to persevere in my aim to rethink and reconceptualise what I consider to be one of the most important topics in the end of the Cold War scholarship – the 1989 East German migration to West Germany via Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, and Austria. This work was also generously supported by the John Dumbreck Doctoral Scholarship in Slavonic Studies without which this study would not be at all possible. I am grateful I had the privilege to bring this research to light in this supportive company of mentors and sponsors.

I learnt one and improved another language to be able to research this topic in its original-language newspaper reports and scholarly publications. For that I am indebted to Dr Katarina Čermáková, Ms Adéla Herbsová, and Dr Kristýna Dufková for teaching me Czech at the University of Glasgow, starting at the level of interest in the Czech Republic's past iteration as Czechoslovakia to being able to discuss its rich social, cultural, historical, and political realities. Their patience and encouragement led me to the Czech language Summer School of Slavonic Studies in Poděbrady, participation generously supported by the scholarships of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic. It was there where knowledgeable and kind lecturers instilled my research with linguistic confidence I cherish professionally and personally. I thank my parents and relatives for my Polish language skills because they insisted on speaking this language to me even when I could not understand it – now I am able to employ it in my studies. I extend my thanks to the understanding and helpful staff at the University of Glasgow Research Annexe, the National Library of the Czech Republic in Prague, the University College London's School of Slavonic and East European Studies Library, the British Library, and *Associated Press* and *Gazeta Wyborcza* digital archival repositories, as well as assistance of Jakub Žytek with finding several sources employed in this thesis. Without access to the 1989 press they patiently provided or facilitated this study could not boast about its rich selection of the Czech, Polish, and English-language sources.

Lastly, I am immensely grateful for the diligence and perseverance of my thesis proof-readers, Jacob Roszak and Deborah Robinson. This work would also not be possible without the support received from my loved and cherished ones over the last twelve years of my Lithuanian immigrant life in Glasgow. Thank you all.

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1. WHAT MIGRATION IN 1989?

The question posed above has driven this research from its inception to completion. While many may be acquainted with the revolutionary upheavals in 1989 in Europe, the topic of migrations does not feature in our collective perception of that time. Instead, the end of the Cold War in central and east Europe is commonly perceived through historical, political, and economic lenses to explain how communist regimes and their walls came down. These conventional lines of enquiry obscure other significant processes of the times, such as migrations. This thesis analyses one of the biggest international news stories of 1989 – the East German migration to West Germany around the "Iron Curtain" through Czechoslovakia and Poland, among other countries.[1] In the summer and autumn of that year, more than 200,000 of East Germans crossed international borders and sheltered at the West German diplomatic missions in Prague and Warsaw to expedite their travel west. After months of negotiations, restrictions, and compromises, this development forced East German, Czechoslovak, and Polish authorities to lift up their borders and change the Cold War order in central Europe.[2] While scholars had conceptualised this migration mainly as a diplomatic issue, studies which employed its media and investigated its social dimension in explaining what and how it all happened then are too few. This multilingual, interdisciplinary, and comparative thesis is specifically interested in the textual and visual depictions of this migration, especially the press constructions of the East German migrant identities and their migration narratives in the English, Czech, and Polish news reports. Drawing from historical, migration, and media studies, this analysis demonstrates how those representations were embedded into the Polish and Czechoslovak perceptions of their pasts, presents, and futures at the end of the Cold War. By exploring conceptualisations of this transnational migration, this research proposes a rethinking of 1989 as a year of migrations, and then, of revolutions.

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[1] Such as Hungary and Austria.

[2] Hans-Hermann Hertle, "The Fall of the Wall: The Unintended Self-Dissolution of East Germany's Ruling Regime". *Cold War International History Project Bulletin,* 12, 2001, 1-34. https://zzf-potsdam.de/sites/default/files/mitarbeiter/hertle/2009_04_08_cwihp_bulletin_12_hertle_fall_wall.pdf , (accessed: 9 April 2020), 131.; Katarzyna Stokłosa, "Refugee Crisis in Hungary", 41-60. In: Besier, G. and Stokłosa, K., *How to Deal with Refugees?: Europe as a Continent of Dreams*. Zürich: LIT, 2018, 44.; Katherine Verdery, *What Was Socialism, and What Comes Next?* Princeton: Princeton University Press, [2014]; Patrick Major, *Behind the Berlin Wall: East Germany and the Frontiers of Power*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.

1. 1. Background

Contextual information is necessary to establish the 1989 East German migration west via Czechoslovakia and Poland as a significant process of the end of the Cold War. That allows to highlight gaps in related academic publications and demonstrate the contribution to knowledge this research offers. The late Cold War state-socialist dictatorships in Central Europe could generally understood as gradually but unevenly relaxing their cross-border travel regulations. One such travel reform occurred on the 2nd of May in 1989 when a "loophole in the Iron Curtain" had opened in the reforming Hungarian People's Republic which the orthodox German Democratic Republic (East Germany, GDR) had "struggled so long to preserve [it] in order to maintain its political existence", as György Jenei claimed.[3] East German citizens had yearned for freer travel rules in the GDR for decades – that included both a desire for permanent emigration and temporary vacations abroad.[4] Many vacationed in Hungary and decided to use the opportunity to travel west through the newly opened border to the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany, FRG). In order to reach Hungary, they had to transit via territories of Czechoslovakia and Poland which proved to be a substantial obstacle for them to overcome.[5] Allied with the hardliner socialist GDR leadership, Czechoslovakia was the only socialist state that offered visa-free travel for East Germans. However, its leadership grew increasingly uneasy about their role as a transit space and a container for anxious and impatient emigrants who began sheltering at the FRG diplomatic mission in Prague, and reinstated the requirement for a visa with the GDR in October 1989.[6] Much like contemporary tools for migration management across Europe, tighter border control was mistakenly considered an adequate measure to "force" East German migration in 1989 "out of existence".[7]

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[3] György Jenei, "The Opening of the Hungarian Border for the East German Refugees in 1989: a Public Policy Analysis of a Key Decision". *Society and Economy*, 34(1), 2012, 163-177, https://www.jstor.org/stable/41472193, (accessed: 29 September 2020), 170.

[4] Patrick Major, Behind the Berlin Wall: East Germany and the Frontiers of Power. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010, 194.

[5] Ibid., 240.; Oldřich Tůma "9:00, Praha-Libeň, horní nádraží: exodus východních němců přes Prahu v září 1989". *Soudobé Dějiny*, 6(2/3), 1999, 147-164, http://www.usd.cas.cz/casopis/soudobe-dejiny-2-3-1999/, (accessed: 8 April 2019), 150.

[6] Major, *Behind the Berlin Wall: East Germany and the Frontiers of Power*, 214; Hans-Hermann Hertle, "The October Revolution in East Germany", 113-137. In: Mueller, W., Gehler, M, and Suppan, A. (eds.) *The Revolutions of 1989: a Handbook*. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2015, 124, 126.

[7] Zygmunt Bauman, *Society under Siege*. Cambridge: Polity; Malden: Blackwell Pub., 2002, 121; Mathias Czaika and Mogens Hobolth, "Do Restrictive Asylum and Visa Policies Increase Irregular Migration into Europe?". *European Union Politics*, 17(3), 2016, 345-365, https://doi.org/10.1177/1465116516633299, (accessed: 28 Sept 2022).

Poland became the next destination for East Germans. Unlike Czechoslovakia, Poland was at the centre of democratic reforms as its independent trade union "Solidarność" ("Solidarity"), banned from operation in 1981, was legalised in 1989, won a semi-election in the country, and formed a coalition government with the Polish United Workers' Party (Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza, PZPR) in August 1989. However, Poland's new government was in its earliest stages of transition itself in the summer and autumn months of 1989. East Germans attempted dangerous crossings of the Polish-GDR border-river Oder in order to reach Warsaw, which tested the new government's adherence to its communist border laws and interpretations of its democratising statehood.[8] The FRG diplomatic representation in Warsaw's Saska Kępa district also served as one of the shelters for the East German migrants, as Prague's had.[9] The academic literature on the development of this migration in Poland is sparse as fewer East Germans came to Poland in comparison to Czechoslovakia. Nevertheless, key decisions of this migration process were reached in Warsaw which had significant reverberations in Prague. By including the Polish news discourse on this migration, this study represents the first such multilingual, interdisciplinary, and comparative analysis of the East German migration press coverage. It addresses the gap in existing scholarship an offers an alternative way to understand the events of 1989 better. It sheds light on the early stages of the Polish democratic transition and the late stages of the fall of the Czechoslovak communism as it evaluates political and ideological changes, traceable in their press discourse on this migration. It also raises awareness about this migration itself, as well as invites to pay closer attention to other cross-border migrations in Europe in 1989 prior to its dramatic political changes became the front-page news around the world.

1. 2. Research problem and academic contribution

No specialist books dedicated to the 1989 East German migration have yet been published which employed the selected languages and methods this thesis uses to study this topic.[10] However, the legacy and impact of this migration have attracted considerable interest

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[8] Jakub Doležal, "Přes ambasády ke svobodě. Drama východoněmeckého exodu v roce 1989". *Soudobé Dějiny,* 21(1-2), 2014, 79-133, https://casopiskontexty.cz/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/kontexty-5-2019.pdf, (accessed: 30 April 2021), 124.

[9] Hans-Hermann Hertle, "The Fall of the Wall: The Unintended Self-Dissolution of East Germany's Ruling Regime". *Cold War International History Project Bulletin,* 12, 2001, 1-34. https://zzf-potsdam.de/sites/default/files/mitarbeiter/hertle/2009_04_08_cwihp_bulletin_12_hertle_fall_wall.pdf , (accessed: 9 April 2020), 134.

[10] Research of the German-language sources was not conducted for this project as its author does not speak German. Scholars writing in English whose work is discussed in this thesis, however, employed German-language sources, especially archived political documents from the German Federal Archives.

culturally and socially. It has received artistic and commemorative focus via documentaries, films, photography collections, exhibitions, sculptures, and organised meetings of former East German migrants at German Embassies in Warsaw and Prague.[11] Those contributions demonstrate the power of socially and culturally articulated efforts to raise awareness of this migration by showcasing its micro-histories forming both individual and collective memory. In comparison to academic outputs, social and cultural aspects of this migration, such as its textual and visual discourse, observed in the 1989 press, had not received much attention.[12] The majority of existing journal articles and book chapters on this topic almost unanimously employ historical and political lenses to position it as part of the late Cold War diplomacy and negotiations between the state-socialist "East" and liberal democratic "West" governments. The most recent study considered the East German migration via Prague in terms of its press representations in the Czechoslovak Communist Party newspaper *Rudé Právo*.[13] However, it was limited in its theoretical and methodological scope and did not approach the news discourse surrounding this migration comparatively with other officially circulating newspapers in Czechoslovakia, the press of a semi-democratic Poland, or a global English language news agency sources. Crucially, East German identity representations were not interpreted as forming specific migration narratives in the 1989 press which provided meaning to their textual and visual expressions, comparable across the English, Czech, and Polish language news reports.

After careful research into the media discourse of the East German migration west via Prague and Warsaw in 1989, it becomes very clear that few news stories were bigger than this. Yet a critical comparative and multilingual qualitative research focusing on the

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[11] Photography collections: Blanka Lamrová, *Zlom epochy Praha 1989 / Zeitenwende Prag 1989 / The End of an Era Prague 1989*. KANT - Karel Kerlický, [Praha], 2016; Vilém Prečan and Karel Cudlín (ed. Jitka Hanáková), *Německý podzim 1989 v Praze: cesta východoněmeckých občanů za svobodou / Der Deutsche Herbst 1989 in Prag: der Weg der DDR-Bürger in die Freiheit*. Československé dokumentační středisko; Exil, Praha, Frankfurt am Main, 2014; Jaroslav Kučera, Daniela Mrázková, and Dušan Veselý, *1989: Pád Železné Opony*. Výstáva pod záštitou prezidenta České republiky Miloše Zemana, Královský Letohrádek a Královská Zahrada, Pražský Hrad, 31.5.-30.11.2019. Správa Pražského hradu/Prague Castle Administration, Praha/Prague, 2019; *Prager Botschaft/en 1989*, https://www.facebook.com/PragerBotschaften1989/; Krzysztof Czajka, *Tschüss DDR!: über Warschau in die Freiheit / Żegnaj DDR!: przez Warszawę ku wolności*. Fundacja Współpracy Polsko-Niemieckiej – Warszawa, 2009; Ralf Kukula, Matthias Bruhn, *Fany a pes / Fritzi – A Revolutionary Tale*. MAUR Production, 2019; "Signal" festival in Prague, the "Trabant" installation on the Petřín Hill by Signal Production and Post Bellum. *Trabi*, https://www.signalfestival.com/en/history/2019/trabi/

[12] Discussed in detail in the following chapter.

[13] Beatrice Michalovska, *'The Prague Exit': Representations of East German Migration in the Official Press of the Czechoslovak Communist Party in 1989*. [MPhil. Glasgow: University of Glasgow, 2017], http://theses.gla.ac.uk/30736/: also included a case study analysis of key news reports from *The Times* and *The Washington Post.*

most important actors of these news stories and their identity construction practices and narrative formations has been missing thus far. This research project offers a balanced, interdisciplinary exploration of multilingual journalistic coverage of the 1989 East German migration west in the selected press accounts. It links English, Czech, and Polish migration, language, and Cold War scholarship to challenge claims that migrations "were not seen as any big threat to the Cold War relations and the balance between the two opposing socio-political and economic blocs" because they were so tightly controlled during the conflict.[14] Although cross-border movements were restricted in state-socialist dictatorships, the 1989 East German migration press coverage in Czech, Polish, and English languages reveals that this process was a disruptive force that challenged the Cold War order in Europe and contributed to its change.

Scholarly enquiries into contemporary migrations continue questioning reproduced constructions of migrant identities in the press, and this study contributes to their argument that various terms and conceptualisations employed in contemporary migration reporting are not novel but have their own histories and narratives that reinforce them.[15] Despite the general consensus among the Cold War rhetoric scholars that it was "not entirely a war of words", as Robert L. Scott has noted, it was nevertheless conducted with the help of ideologically divisive rhetoric by those "convinced of the diabolical nature and intentions of their nation's adversaries" which came into a sharp focus during this research.[16] The press of the time, as a product of those Cold War contestations, makes an insightful medium of enquiry into wider perceptions of migrations and how they were ideologically constructed in their "routinized form of newspeak", as Garton Ash defined ideology under state-socialist dictatorships.[17] Patrick Major and Rana Mitter have argued that "with communist leaders talking newspeak […] even behind closed doors" and

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[14] Đana Luša, Florijan Bašić, Bruno Rukavina, "European Migration Crisis: Political Discourse, Construction of Stereotypes and Securitisation of Migrations at the University of Zagreb". *Teorija in Praksa*, 55(2), 2018, 388-418. (Accessed: 9 April 2018). https://www.fdv.uni-lj.si/docs/default-source/tip/european-migration-crisis-political-discourse-construction-of-stereotypes-and-securitisation-of-migrations-at-the-university-of-zagreb.pdf?sfvrsn=0, 389.

[15] Nick Dines, Nicola Montagna, and Elena Vacchelli, "Beyond Crisis Talk: Interrogating Migration and Crises in Europe". *Sociology*, 53(3), 2018, 439-447, http://doi.org/10.1177/0038038518767372, (accessed: 15 Dec 2020); Ratajczak, Magdalena, and Katarzyna Jędrzejczyk-Kuliniak. "Muslims and Refugees in the Media in Poland". Global Media Journal: German Edition, 6(1), 2016, https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/75984, (accessed: 21 November 2023).

[16] Robert L. Scott, "Cold War and Rhetoric: Conceptually and Critically", 1-19. In: Medhurst, M. J., et al (eds.) *Cold War Rhetoric: Strategy, Metaphor, and Ideology*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1997, 1.

[17] Timothy Garton Ash, *The Magic Lantern: the Revolution of '89*, London: Atlantic Books, 2019 [1990], 110.

placing "a premium on conformity of ideas", scholars are obliged to "take culture seriously as a category" of their academic enquiry.[18] Daily news formed culture – Siegfried Weichlein argued that the media "got a Cold War message out", "reflected on the Cold War", and "recoded its meaning in new ways".[19] Echoing this sentiment, Henrik G. Bastiensen, Martin A. Klimke and Rolf Werenskjold have argued that "many experienced the conflicts and its developments only through the mass media", "with news coverage having perhaps the most pervasive effect in countries around the world".[20] Explanations and conceptualisations of everyday events by the journalists and those related to information control constructed worldviews within which certain representations of people and events were naturalised and normalised, as well as made meaningful and true to ordinary people. In societies which experienced ideological censorship, such as Poland and Czechoslovakia, "everything that had to do with the word, with the press, with television, was of the first importance" during anti-communist demonstrations, as T. G. Ash had found out.[21] Recognising the importance of language in shaping our worldviews, identities and migration stories of East Germans in Prague and Warsaw are understood in this thesis are seen here as textually and visually articulated through the ideologically contingent worldviews expressed in the Polish, Czech, and English language news in 1989.

1. 3. Selected news sources

This thesis expands the methodological and theoretical vision the topic of the 1989 East German migration west via Prague and Warsaw has been afforded in related scholarship. It highlights social and ideological nuances in seeing and reading about migrating populations in the press, supported by related reflections on contemporary processes of knowledge production about them in historical, migration, media, and identity studies. The analysed press sample consists of the Czech *Lidová Demokracie* (tr. *People's Democracy*, LD), *Svobodné Slovo* (tr. *Free Word, Slovo*), and *Mladá Fronta* (tr. *Young*

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[18] Patrick Major and Rana Mitter, "East is East and West is West? Towards a Comparative Socio-Cultural History of the Cold War". *Cold War History*, 4(1), 2003, 1-22, https://doi.org/10.1080/14682740312331391714, (accessed: 24 April 2021), 1, 4.
[19] Siegfried Weichlein, "Representation and Recoding: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Cold War Cultures", 19-66. In: Jarausch, K. H., Ostermann, Ch. and Etges, A. (eds.) *The Cold War: Historiography, Memory, Representation*. De Gruyter: Berlin, 2017, https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110496178, (accessed: 7 June 2021), 23.
[20] Henrik G. Bastiensen, Martin A. Klimke, and Rolf Werenskjold, "Introduction: Mapping the Role of the Media in the late Cold War", chapter 1. In: Bastiensen, H. G., Klimke, M. and Werenskjold, R. (eds.) *Media and the Cold War in the 1980s: between Star Wars and Glasnost*. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019, 4.
[21] Timothy Garton Ash, *The Magic Lantern: the Revolution of '89*, 111.

Front, MF)*;* the Polish *Trybuna Ludu* (tr. *People's Tribune*, TL), *Gazeta Wyborcza* (tr. *Voter's Daily*, GW), *Tygodnik Powszechny* (tr. *Universal Weekly*, TP)*, Życie Warszawy* (tr. *Warsaw Life*, ŻW)*;* and the English language *Associated Press* (AP) agency reports.[22] This research utilises 585 daily, weekly, local, national, and international news reports on the topic of the 1989 East German migration to analyse and compare migrant representations and migration narratives employed to report on the topic.[23] These popular newspapers offer representation of officially circulating ideas and perceptions on this migration by revealing stances of politically and socially-relevant groupings of people who had influence over the processes of decision-making and construction of the East German migration discourse, especially in Czechoslovakia and Poland. Their analysis demonstrates political and ideological tensions within the respective English, Czech, and Polish language informational bubbles of this migration through the use of a variety of linguistic choices for their identities and migration narratives. None of the available research on this topic had explicitly focused on the press as the primary source of information, let alone in three selected languages, thus far.

The Czechoslovak newspaper sample consists of officially circulating newspapers in 1989 from the major political entities on the Czech side of the state. *Mladá Fronta*, *Lidová Demokracie*, and *Svobodné Slovo* form the core of the Czech language part of this research. Although they could not compete with the official Communist Party newspaper *Rudé Právo* in circulation, their alternative informational content demonstrates a degree of pluralism of opinion in the country and is of great value for this research.[24] All three newspapers played a notable role in the country's Velvet Revolution because they expressed solidarity with the student demonstrators and dissidents on the 17th of November and, according to Lubomír Kopeček, thus escaped the ideological binds of

[22] For Czech language translations of newspaper titles, see: Bernard Wheaton and Zdeněk Kavan. *The Velvet Revolution: Czechoslovakia, 1988-1991*. Routledge, New York, 2018, 237. For Polish language translations of newspaper titles: Anonymous, "Poland". *Britannica*, https://www.britannica.com/place/Poland/Theatre-and-motion-pictures, (accessed: 26 October 2023).

[23] The sources were chosen due to their popularity at the time and availability for study which took place during the Covid pandemic. Newspaper locations: *Trybuna Ludu* at the University of Glasgow Research Annexe, spring of 2019; *Lidová Demokracie* and *Svobodné slovo* at the National Library of the Czech Republic in Prague in the summer of 2019; *Gazeta Wyborcza* and *Tygodnik Powszechny* at the UCL SSEES Library and *Mladá Fronta* and *Życie Warszawy* at the British Library in London in the winter of 2019. *Associated Press* and *Gazeta Wyborcza* at their own respective digital archival repositories, spring 2020.

[24] Jakub Končelík, Petr Orság, and Pavel Večeřa, *Dějiny českých médií 20. století.* Praha: Portál, 2010, 249: RP's circulation was around 969,091 copies, *MF* 255,877, *Slovo* 228,409, and *LD*'s 217,400.

Marxism-Leninism and the Czechoslovak Communist Party (KSČ).[25] Kopeček praised their "relative objectivity" regarding the coverage of demonstrations and discovered that, while the preceding East German migration via Czechoslovakia did not capture the full attention of its press, the media became more critical of the KSČ role in its management during the East German migrants' stay in Prague on their way west.[26] By combining these three newspapers to investigate representations of the East German migrants in 1989, this thesis aims to detect and showcase nuance in the ideological state-socialist rhetoric, often misrepresented as painted with the same Soviet brush of unwavering censorship and meaningless official rhetoric. It seeks to unveil, investigate, and compare the "migration vocabulary" of 1989 in the Czech language news discourse.

The Polish language newspapers – *Trybuna Ludu (TL), Gazeta Wyborcza (GW), Tygodnik Powszechny (TP),* and *Życie Warszawy (ŻW)* – were selected for comparison in this research to address a stark deficit in related scholarship on the Polish route of the 1989 East German migration west. The East German migration was not as visible in Warsaw as it was in Prague but the Polish informational context of the 1989 East German migration should be discussed in comparison with the Czechoslovak case regardless. Poland was different from Czechoslovakia in 1989 due to the much higher degree of democratisation in the country that included the first semi-democratic elections held in June where the previously all-ruling PZPR ended up sharing power with the independent trade union "Solidarność".[27] Another important matter of comparison was the gradual disintegration of the Polish communist party censorship in the country. This thesis is especially interested in grasping the extent of an ideological shift in discourse related to migration. Their *GW* newspaper was allowed to officially circulate in Poland only in May in 1989, and it is expected that terms for migrant identity construction and overall migration narratives in *TL* and *GW* contrasted significantly due to the opposition between the political powers they represented, "Solidarność" and Polish communist party. *ŻW* was a Warsaw newspaper which was chosen due to a potential closer look at the East German migration developing in the Warsaw's West German Embassy and its surroundings. *TP*

[25] Lubomír Kopeček, "Za svobodou přes komunistické Československo. Příběh východoněmeckých uprchlíků v Praze a jeho dopady". *Kontexty*, 11(5), 2019, 3-10, https://casopiskontexty.cz/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/kontexty-5-2019.pdf, (accessed: 14 June 2021), 9.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Jan Pakulski, "The Breakthrough: Polish elections in June 1989", 101-116, in: Stefan Markowski, Jan Pakulski (eds.) "The Solidarity Decade 1980-1989: An Australian Perspective". *Humanities Research*, XVI(3), 2010, http://press-files.anu.edu.au/downloads/press/p24291/pdf/ch104.pdf (accessed: 18 Feb 2021), 104.

partly represents the intellectual wing of "Solidarność" union and was chosen in this thesis for insightful opinion pieces and essays which may have provided historical, cultural, and political context to interpret news on this migration. To various extents, it is expected that these newspapers demonstrate how socialist ideology was challenged by alternative visions for understanding this migration in Poland in comparison to how it was understood in Czechoslovakia.

The Czechoslovak and Polish newspapers operated nationally and could not compete with the reach of English as a *lingua franca*. News reports on this migration in English did not only make this news story more accessible to English-speakers around the world but it have also been chosen for the fact that it represented the democratic world and related views on this migration. Specifically, the English language news agency *Associated Press* referenced Czechoslovak and Polish news content in their international news reports on the 1989 East German migration west. It was an aggregate of information on world events with a global subscription network which made it available to other newspapers to share. That meant that its depictions of events and their narration contributed to the news reports around the world that both spread and shaped national constructions of local and global affairs. For instance, by 1985 the agency was collaborating with over 300 news and photography bureaus around the world, with 1300 daily newspapers and 5700 broadcast stations receiving information from the *AP* journalists in the US alone, and an additional 8500 subscribers abroad.[28] Its outreach was even higher in 1989 judging from their 2019 report claiming that "more than half the world's population sees journalism from *The Associated Press* every day".[29] Hence, the *AP* reports are interpreted here as contributing to the creation of an international East German migration narrative as compared to the state controlled press in Czechoslovakia or the news in a semi-democratic Poland. This agency also represents the most sizeable primary source material in this thesis with 205 news reports on this migration.[30] Most importantly, the *AP* is the only news outlet of those selected that published interviews with East German migrants which are especially valuable in research on the (self)representation of identities. For these reasons, the *AP* was selected as the most

[28] International Directory of Company Histories, "The Associated Press", 8 June 2018, https://www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences-and-law/economics-business-and-labor/businesses-and-occupations/associated-press, (accessed: 7 August 2021).
[29] "*AP* by the Numbers", https://web.archive.org/web/20201214065039/https://www.ap.org/about/annual-report/2019/ap-by-the-numbers, (accessed: 24 Feb 2023).
[30] In comparison to 145 Czech language ones that represent 3 national newspapers, and 215 Polish language daily and weekly news reports that represent 4 national newspapers.

balanced research source for comparison with the two informational discourses in primary focus – the Czech and Polish language press.

1. 4. Terminology

Throughout this research, the question as to how to refer to the East Germans who sought a way west in 1989 via Prague and Warsaw was central the analysis and interpretation of the research findings. The term "refugee" was often employed in western press in order to define migrating individuals from the Soviet Union and its socialist allies behind "the Iron Curtain" during the Cold War conflict. It defined those people as political and moral adversaries of the regimes which restricted the freedoms of their populations. However, David Scott FitzGerald and Rawan Arar have argued that this term and related legal stipulations were essentially a western creation based on "classically liberal" political and civil rights.[31] According to them, "none of the Eastern Bloc countries, except for Yugoslavia, participated in the negotiation of the [Geneva] Convention" which is the foundational legal reference point for the term.[32] Hence, several possibilities were considered regarding how to refer to the central figures of this research included Polish and Czech language newspapers in its analysis. The term "migrant" was chosen in this research as a general descriptor and it is closely related to how a migration is perceived by the author of this thesis. Mette Louise Berg and Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh's definition of migration was chose as the most appropriate explanation of the 1989 East German migration west. It is seen as a "multidirectional process that is intrinsically related to diverse forms of encounters: with and between different people and objects, places and spaces, temporalities and materialities, beliefs and desires, and sociocultural and political systems".[33] East Germans who emigrated west via Prague and Warsaw were not simply people moving from point A to B, as traditional conceptions of migrants used to maintain. They were people on the move who, apart from encountering a variety of difficulties throughout their migration, navigated complex political systems, their border controls, ideologies, and also multiple representations of their own identities and migration stories in Czech, Polish, and English press. Theirs was a non-linear migration of connections and

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[31] David Scott FitzGerald and Rawan Arar, "The Sociology of Refugee Migration". *Annual Review of Sociology*, 44, (2018), 387-406, https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-soc-073117- 041204, (accessed: 10 May 2018), 390.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Mette Louise Berg and Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, "Introduction to the Issue: Encountering Hospitality and Hostility". *Migration and Society: Advances in Research*, 1(1), 2018, 1-6, https://doi.org/10.3167/arms.2018.010102, (accessed: 20 May 2022), 1.

encounters with local residents of Prague and Warsaw, as well as with other fellow migrants pushing west around the Iron Curtain, a system of political, ideological, economic, social and cultural entanglements which defined the Cold War.

Instead of applying flawed legal definitions as ready-made labels to complex issues, this thesis is inclusive and acknowledging of the context of this particular migration setting and the circumstances of those navigating it in 1989. The term "migrant" accounts for and conveys the diversity of people's identities and experiences on the move. It is in line with Michi Messer, Renée Schroeder, and Ruth Wodak's argument employed in their discourse analysis study which states that "migrants accumulate multiple national/cultural identities" during their migration beyond the legal status ascribed to them.[34] The choice is further strengthened by the documented presence of the national West German, Polish, and Czechoslovak branches of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Prague and Warsaw during the 1989 East German migration and the organisation's notion of "migrants".[35] The ICRC holds that migrants are people who "seek opportunities or safer and better prospects" due to "a combination of choices and constraints [that] are involved" in decisions to migrate.[36] Political decisions influence the economy and social positions of populations and thus create conditions that may seem untenable to those who later choose to move. Stéphanie Le Bihan explained that the "inclusive description" of migrants that the ICRC provides is able "to capture without discrimination the full extent of humanitarian concerns related to migration and to provide sufficient flexibility to address migrants' often complex situations."[37] This interpretation acknowledges diverse motivations for their migrations other scholars also consider among the most important aspects of the process.[38]

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[34] Michi Messer, Renée Schroeder, and Ruth Wodak, "Preface", i-xii, in: Messer, M., Schroeder, R., and Wodak, R. (eds.) *Migrations: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*. Wien; Heidelberg; New York; Dordrecht; London: Springer, 2012, xii.

[35] As did the Order of Malta, notably operating in Budapest in 1989, which follows similar humanitarian values to the ICRC, i. e. "Upholding human dignity and caring for people in need". *Sovereign Order of Malta*. https://www.orderofmalta.int/sovereign-order-of-malta/mission/, (accessed: 21 April 2022). A focused analysis of its role in the 1989 East German migration is outside the scope of this research as it is related more with the development of this migration in Hungary and the Hungarian linguistic and socio-political contexts.

[36] Stéphanie Le Bihan, "Addressing the Protection and Assistance Needs of Migrants: The ICRC Approach to Migration". *International Review of the Red Cross*, 99(1), 2017, 99–119, https://doi.org/10.1017/S1816383118000036, (accessed: 20 April 2022), 100.

[37] Ibid., 104.

[38] Georgia Cole, "Beyond Labelling: Rethinking the Role and Value of the Refugee "Label" Through Semiotics". *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 31(1), 2017, 1-19, https://academic.oup.com/jrs/article-

The 1989 East German migration is understood here both as a physical process and as a news story, formed with the help of specific representations and narratives. It is interpreted through lenses of transnationalism as a part of transnational history. Padraic Kenney and Gerd-Rainer Horn defined transnational history as "the study of great events that simply cannot be captured within the narrative of one country" because societies "consciously or unconsciously embrace similar experiences or express similar aspirations across distinctly national frontiers." [39] Transnationalism could be understood as a perspective that challenges "the nation-state as the sole starting point of empirical analysis", as Anna Amelina and Thomas Faist have put it.[40] The representations of East German identities and stories of their migration formed several narratives in distinct news outlets across several linguistic and cultural areas which, nevertheless, also expressed "commonalities" and "similarities" in their portrayals of the migrants.[41] Amelina and Faist have referred to this approach as the "both/and" logic which challenges the limiting and biased distinction of "either/or" of the so-called "methodological nationalism" , often embraced in comparative studies as a default mode of enquiry.[42] According to them, the advantage of transnational approaches is their contribution in avoiding "juxtaposing the global/local or national/transnational spatial frameworks" which this thesis recognises in its comparison of East German migration representations and narratives of cultural and social settings of the Czechoslovak, Polish, and English press.[43] This research project aims to highlight diversity of and within ideologically di/similar textual and visual representations of migrants rather than different nation-states. Following this, transnationalism rejects typical migrant/refugee and economic/political binary which nation-states establish to make sense of migrations. It also allows to reinterpret this migration as a cross-border movement of people and ideas about them in the press representations and its migration narratives in the daily and weekly news reports.

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abstract/31/1/1/4079373/, (accessed: 27 Nov 2019), 13.; Saskia Sassen, "Europe's Migrations: the Numbers and the Passions are Not New". *Third Text*, 20(6), 2006, 635-645, http://doi.org/10.1080/09528820601068658, (accessed: 27 September 2018), 638.

[39] Padraic Kenney and Gerd-Rainer Horn, "Introduction: Approaches to the Transnational", ix-xix. In: Kenney, P. and Horn, G. H. (eds.) *Transnational Moments of Change: Europe 1945, 1968, 1989*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004, x.

[40] Anna Amelina and Thomas Faist, "De-Naturalizing the National in Research Methodologies: Key Concepts of Transnational Studies in Migration". *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 35(10), 2012, 1707-1724, https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2012.659273, (accessed: 5 April 2021), 1707, 1713.

[41] Kenney and Horn, "Introduction: Approaches to the Transnational", ix.

[42] Amelina and Faist, "De-Naturalizing the National in Research Methodologies", 1713-1714.

[43] Ibid., 1714.

1. 5. Thesis structure

This thesis proceeds with the inquiry into the scholarship on this topic in chapter 2 to contextualise this migration and situate this research within wider academic debates. It also presents previous methodological and theoretical assumptions that led to particular conceptualisations of this topic this thesis builds on or challenges. It argues that this migration cannot be solely understood as a historical and political event but should also be viewed in social and cultural terms as a cross-border movement of people and information about them which formed the very knowledge of this process. Chapter 3 presents the theoretical rationale and methodology behind this research which stems from a combination of historical, migration, and media studies and focuses on representations of migrant identity in the press. It clarifies the logical structures behind this rethinking of the topic and stresses the importance of focusing on identity constructions and development of ideas related to migration settings. The chapter highlights one of the main contentions of this research which holds that the 1989 East German migration west and its press depictions cannot be fathomed without specific perceptions regarding state borders they crossed, political spaces as migration countries of origin, transit, and destination they left, transited via, or tried to reach, and places of shelter, sanctuary, and daily life during their migration. The following three chapters (4, 5, and 6) present the main contribution of this study – a detailed analysis of the English, Czechoslovak, and Polish press representations of migrating East Germans and the migration narratives which provided meaning to those representations, both textual and visual. The concluding comparative chapter 7 discusses the research findings, their significance, and opens this research up for future work on the topic. This structure tackles the main contentions of this research, introduces ways forward in addressing a gap in the topical scholarship, and demonstrates how the proposed contribution enriches our understanding of this migration as well as similar processes of mobility at the end of the Cold War in Europe.

2. CURRENT SCHOLARSHIP

It is important to understand how the 1989 East German migration via Prague and Warsaw to West Germany (Federal Republic of Germany, FRG) was previously approached in related academic publications in order to situate this specific research within wider discussions related to this topic as well as the late Cold War. This chapter tackles the dominant assumption that this migration was solely a significant event in German history, and maintains that it should be approached as a transnational process that is a part of the Czechoslovak and Polish pasts as well. It also highlights that this migration was the focus of local, national, and international press in summer and autumn in 1989, but the existing scholarship analyse it in diplomacy and history-centric terms. It has not been considered as a socially and culturally constructed process which raised important questions about national borders, political doctrines, and the future of Europe at a time of great political and social shifts. The chapter begins with a discussion on the Cold War perceptions and representations of migrating individuals and migrations. Then it presents and analyses theoretical strands within English (and German) language scholarship that conceptualised this migration as either weakening, strengthening, or conditioning local mass protests against East German (German Democratic Republic, GDR) dictatorship in 1989. Lastly, the chapter showcases existing academic attempts to grasp social responses to this migration, visible in the Czechoslovak and Polish scholarship on the topic, and challenges to expand on them. This chapter demonstrates how research into its social and cultural dimensions may expand our knowledge of this migration as well as the end of the Cold War.

2. 1. Cold War migration representations

The historical context of the 1989 East German emigration bears heavy ideological marks despite occurring at the end of the Cold War in Europe. Odd Arne Westad's definition of "Cold War" is a helpful starting point in untangling its socio-political realities. Westad defined the term as a "confrontation between capitalism and socialism" that "constituted an international system, in the sense that the world's leading powers all based their […] policies on some relationship to it".[44] He maintained that although ideas and beliefs about the world then "tended towards the absolute" and "only one's own system was good", the

[44] Odd Arne Westad, *The Cold War: a World History*. London: Allen Lane; Penguin Books, 2017, 1.

leading capitalist and socialist powers such as the United States of America and the Soviet Union could only aspire for totality and control of their so-called eastern and western blocs of influence in Europe.[45] The relationship central and east European states expressed to this confrontational international system shifted and evolved over time, as did their understanding of migrations which, although restricted at the time, never stopped.

Perceptions of emigrants during the Cold War should be understood as continuously contested and conflicting rather than universal and static. They depended on which side of the "Iron Curtain" (and its ideological spectrum) stood those perceiving them. European political powers, physically and symbolically divided by "the Wall" into "East" and "West", afforded little to no agency to migrants as they defined and named them. Commenting on the blurred lines between terms used to label them, Tara Zahra has argued that during the Cold War the image of an East European emigrant was contradictory. On one hand, they were perceived as heroic "escapees" and "freedom fighters" in the democratic "West" who suffered under Communism in the "East" while, on the other, those perceptions and identity representations were also clad in "ongoing suspicions that migrants from the East might be undesirable citizens, spies, or opportunists".[46] These depictions helped Western "governments and international agencies" to begin categorising migrating individuals into two juxtaposed groups of people on the move – the so-called "economic migrants" (opportunists) and "political refugees" (freedom fighters) – in order to control West-bound migrations.[47] The refugee status holders were seen as victims of cruel state-socialist regimes while people labelled "economic migrants" were often denied assistance on the grounds of their supposed wishes for economic self-preservation and alleged misuse of western labour markets, mainly dependent on prevalent prejudice towards "newcomers" that was potent throughout history.[48] Therefore, migrants were defined by terms which assumed their political or economic

[45] Ibid., 2.
[46] Tara Zahra, *The Great Departure: Mass Migration from Eastern Europe and the Making of the Free World*. New York; London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2017, 16.
[47] Ibid., 14.
[48] Ibid., 15.; Anna Mazurkiewicz, "Introduction", 1-12, in: Mazurkiewicz, A. (ed.) *East Central European Migrations during the Cold War: a Handbook*. Berlin; München; Boston: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2019), 6.; Corey Ross, *The East German Dictatorship: Problems and Perspectives in the Interpretation of the GDR*. London: Arnold, 2002, 8.; Rainer Münz, "A Continent of Migration: European Mass Migration in the Twentieth Century". *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 22(2), 1996, 201-226, https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.1996.9976535, (accessed: 10 Jan 2022), 205.

motives of migrations which allegedly also referred to their individual personal qualities, and established their treatment accordingly.

Words mattered during the Cold War as they either called for or denied protection of vulnerable individuals. Harsha Walia has claimed that apart from the legally established status of a refugee, terms such as "escapee", an American invention, were used for refugees from the Soviet Union who fled racial, religious, or political persecution.[49] The "victim" narrative, attributed to the refugees and escapees from "the East" in western liberal democratic states, both helped and exploited these migrations for political causes. Stories about dangerous socialist-capitalist border crossings, for example, were often publicised in western media, as Philip Ther has pointed out, and were usually connected to "the normative and political allure of human rights" which established states west from the "Iron Curtain" as their providers and those east from it as their suppressors.[50] According to Peter Gatrell, such stories served as evidence of political discontent within the Soviet regimes and emigrants from there were generally depicted as "heroic figures" who helped in "securing the West's claims to moral superiority" over its socialist adversary.[51] For instance, the Basic Law, Article 116, of the capitalist and liberal democratic Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) granted emigrants from East Germany, citizens of the socialist and authoritarian German Democratic Republic (GDR), an automatic citizenship, claiming any German was a citizen of the only legitimate German state – West Germany.[52] This decision allowed the FRG to position itself as the saviour of their German brethren in the GDR, which undermined the sovereignty and authority of this socialist state, and contributed to the positive self-representations of "the West" and negative depictions of "the East".

However, Gatrell has claimed that a new kind of migration rhetoric began to take hold in the "West" in the 1980s, when travel from "the East" somewhat liberalised as part of the Soviet reform policies of *perestroika* and *glasnost*, initiated by Mikhail Gorbachev.[53] "Escapees" from "the East" were more often defined as selfish "economic

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[49] Harsha Walia, *Border and Rule: Global Migration, Capitalism, and the Rise of Racist Nationalism*. Chicago, Illinois: Haymarket Books, 2021, 114.
[50] Ibid.; Philipp Ther (tr. J. Riemer), *The Outsiders: Refugees in Europe since 1492*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019, (e-book), loc. 6225-6231.
[51] Peter Gatrell, *The Unsettling of Europe: How Migration Reshaped a Continent*. New York: Basic Books, 2019, 51.
[52] Patrick O'Brien, "Germany's Newest Aliens: the East Germans". *East European Quarterly*, 30, 1997, 449-470, https://digitalcommons.trinity.edu/polysci_faculty, (accessed: 3 December 2018), 452.
[53] Ibid.; Gatrell, *The Unsettling of Europe*, 342, 380.

migrants", not as "heroes", who were driven from their stagnating Soviet states in the hopes of financial prosperity and not by political persecution.[54] Stories of their migrations became a cautionary tale of threats and dangers they had allegedly introduced in their western destination states, which included spying and abuse of social benefits and markets of "the West".[55] Claiming this view existed much earlier, already in the immediate post-war years, Tony Judt argued that "most people expressed a desire to see immigration reduced rather than increased", which was mainly attributed to countries' abilities to cope with increased number of residents at a time of destruction and economic devastation.[56] Since then, the perception of non-citizen migrants as a burden to the state remains a popular trope in populist anti-immigration narratives despite research claiming otherwise.[57] Therefore, western migration discourse of the late Cold War and its categories for east and central Europeans emigrating from state-socialist dictatorships changed with time, and generally settled on suspicion of immigrants' motivations and disbelief over any substantial potential contributions to destination states.

Emigrations from the so-called state-socialist "East" were akin to a state treason at various stages of political life in East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Poland. The scholarship on the Czech and Polish language constructions of migrations and migrants makes it clear that both Czechoslovakia (and Czech Republic) and Poland were emigration rather immigration countries, and that decades of occupations and dictatorial regimes controlled migrations and closed up these countries. Emigrations of socialist citizens to capitalist democracies were, indeed, prevented by the whole array of physical border fortifications, bureaucratic restrictions, and cultivated stigma.[58] With regards to Poland, the aim of the communist party in power there regarding emigration from Poland was to instil in its "subjects the belief that there was no escape" from the state-socialist order and its laws since its early stages, as Dariusz Stola argued.[59] The situation in Czechoslovakia was similar as well. Accounts mapping the history of emigration discourse in the media in the Czech Republic revealed that the refugee/migrant binary, prominent in contemporary reporting on migrations, remains blurred – both terms were

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[54] Ibid.
[55] Münz, "A Continent of Migration: European Mass Migration in the Twentieth Century", 202.
[56] Tony Judt, *Postwar: a History of Europe since 1945*, New York: Penguin Press, 2005, 31.
[57] Philipp Engler (et al.), "Migration to Advanced Economies Can Raise Growth", *IMF Blog*, 19 June 2020, https://www.imf.org/en/Blogs/Articles/2020/06/19/blog-weo-chapter4-migration-to-advanced-economies-can-raise-growth, (accessed: 28 February 2024).
[58] Dariusz Stola, *Kraj bez wyjścia? Migracje z Polski 1949-1989*. Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, Warszawa, 2010, 47.
[59] Ibid.

used synonymously and continue to be conflated as journalists did not generally have any specific internal policy guidance or instructions on the definitions of terms for migrating individuals they should employ.[60] Pavel Pospěch and Adéla Jurečková found that today both terms have gained more negative connotations than before, and the distinction between them continues to be based on the users' lack of migration details, as well as understanding of empathy and deservingness of compassion when it comes to others.[61] But migration policies and rhetoric changed and liberalised in both countries during the years, and contemporary Czech Republic and Poland should not be perceived as countries completely hostile to cross-border migrations and migrants.[62] Nevertheless, migration-related terms and narratives in the press are used to relay various perceptions and ideas, often negative and hostile, about migrating individuals and supporters of cross-border movements.[63]

To a degree, Czechoslovak and Polish communist government attitudes towards migration largely correlated with the East German leadership's perceptions. They treated emigrants in a similar light as criminals and prisoners – "aberrant phenomena" – and not as part of a development caused by the "political struggle for control of the lives of GDR citizens", as Norman M. Naimark claimed.[64] Associating emigrants with criminality and illegality tainted the very concept of human mobility there, similarly as it does today. According to Patrick Major, East German Socialist Unity Party of Germany (tr. *Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands*, the SED) even termed its citizens' emigration attempts as *Republikflucht*, a term semantically implying a *Fahnenflucht* – "desertion from the republic", or a military defection.[65] East German citizens had to comply with strict travel laws which required an extensive list of state-authorised permissions to travel

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[60] Pavel Pospěch and Adéla Jurečková (et al.), "Media coverage of migration in Czech Republic, Estonia and Slovakia". Člověk v tísni: Praha, 2019, https://www.peopleinneed.net/exposed-media-coverage-of-migration-in-czech-republic-estonia-and-slovakia-comparative-report-1325pub, (accessed: 21 November 2023), 20.
[61] Pavel Pospěch and Adéla Jurečková (et al.), "Migrace bez migrantů? Mediální obraz migrace a jejích aktérů v České republice". Člověk v tísni: Praha, 2019, https://doi.org/10.1080/04353684.2022.2098156, (accessed: 21 November 2023), 3.
[62] As the acceptance and integration of Ukrainian refugees, not without its issues, demonstrates today.
[63] Deena Zaru, "Europe's unified welcome of Ukrainian refugees exposes 'double standard' for nonwhite asylum seekers: Experts". ABC News, 8 March 2022, https://abcnews.go.com/International/europes-unified-ukrainian-refugees-exposes-double-standard-nonwhite/story?id=83251970, (accessed: 16 January 2023).
[64] Norman M. Naimark, "'Ich will hier raus': Emigration and the Collapse of the German Democratic Republic", 72-95. In: Banac, I., *Eastern Europe in Revolution*, (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1992, 73.
[65] Patrick Major, "Going West: the Open Border and the Problems of *Republikflucht*". In: Major, P. and Osmond, J. (eds.) *The Workers' and Peasants' State: Communism and Society in East Germany under Ulbricht, 1945-71*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002, 190-209.

abroad, especially to West Germany, where many of them had relatives and friends.[66] Mary Elise Sarotte estimated that "2,7 million people had left the East German state to the West" between 1949 and 1961, and, in comparison, the number of emigrants for the period of 1961-1989 from the GDR was put just about 600,000.[67] Only the 1975 Helsinki Accords and its Final Act, signed by state-socialist regimes, had introduced limited freedom of movement liberalisations to the socialist-capitalist travel regimes, as James Mark has claimed.[68] East German citizens, among others in "the East", "still required complicated permissions and authorisations and reports from their work brigade, the Communist Youth, or the local trade union, which assessed their trustworthiness and political loyalty".[69] But as Hans-Hermann Hertle explained, regardless of the outcome, both successful and unsuccessful emigrants "were marginalized, discriminated against, or criminalized", as well as directed the attention of the GDR secret police officers to their friends and relatives as untrustworthy social elements.[70]

Bureaucratic hurdles did not stop East Germans (or other state-socialist subjects, for that matter) from trying to leave their country by overstaying their visas issued for work trips or holidays, and even by scaling weaponised German-German frontiers. The most politically troublesome residents were even sold off by the GDR authorities to the FRG for the so-called "ransom money" used to pay back East Germany's foreign debts, mainly to the FRG.[71] Bethany Hicks has noted that, from the East German perspective, this practice operated as a so-called safety valve that silenced the regime's critics and punished acts of disunity, thus, creating a sense of national cohesion and ideological loyalty.[72] Migrations were important processes in the Cold War power balance: deportations of politically volatile East Germans constituted a business venture between the two German states that propped up the GDR communist dictatorship for decades while these "ransom" emigrants could be considered as saved from the GDR dictatorship by the

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[66] James Mark, *1989. A Global History of Eastern Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019, 134.
[67] Mary Elise Sarotte, *The Collapse: the Accidental Opening of the Berlin Wall*. New York: Basic Books, 2014, 15.
[68] James Mark, 1989. A Global History of Eastern Europe, 134.
[69] Ibid.
[70] Hans-Hermann Hertle, "The October Revolution in East Germany", 113-137. In: Mueller, W., Gehler, M, and Suppan, A. (eds.) *The Revolutions of 1989: a Handbook*. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2015, 118: in 1960s to 1980s, "more than 71,000" cases ended with imprisonment.
[71] Ibid., 17.
[72] Bethany Hicks, "Germany", chapter 5. In: Mazurkiewicz, A. (ed.) *East Central European Migrations during the Cold War: a Handbook*. Berlin; München; Boston: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2019, part 3.2 and 3.3. (pages unmarked in a digital copy).

FRG authorities. Controlling emigration with the help of strict regulations and trade-offs also ensured a self-representation of the GDR leadership as united and strong in suppressing dissent.

2. 1. 1. East German migration west in 1989

East German emigrants in 1989 had to tackle several migration regimes. In 1989, international changes created a possibility for a mass emigration of hundreds of thousands of East Germans from the GDR state.[73] News about the Hungarian-Austrian border opening emboldened many in the GDR to act from May, 1989. According to Pól O'Dochartaigh, the "first mass exodus" of East Germans since 1961 took place in August 1989 at the Hungarian-Austrian border.[74] On the 17th of August, the Pan-European picnic in Šopron was held by Hungarian opposition groups and supportive communist party reformers in celebration of European unity and solidarity.[75] Then, more than 600 East Germans surprised the Hungarian border guards and crossed into Austria.[76] Although the use of the term "exodus" greatly exaggerates this emigration episode, it was the biggest one-time case of emigration of East Germans across the international borders since the building of the "Berlin Wall" thus far. It was followed by a violent incident days later as Kurt-Werner Schultz, emigrating with his wife and child, was mortally wounded by a Hungarian border guard whose gun had went off (allegedly unsecured) during a scuffle that ensued as border guards tried to stop the family from crossing the Hungarian-Austrian border.[77] Yet the tragedy of Schultz did not deter others from emigration via Hungary, potentially because of the lack of information about it. Thousands of East Germans came to "camp" in the FRG Embassies in Budapest, and later Prague and Warsaw. As Patric Major pointed out, such occupations of foreign embassies were "the most extreme option"

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[73] Tony Judt, *Postwar: a History of Europe since 1945*, New York: Penguin Press, 2005, 610.
[74] Pól O'Dochartaigh, *Germany since 1945*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004, 184.
[75] Andreas Oplatka, "Hungary: Renunciation of Power and Power-Sharing", 77-91. In: Mueller, W., Gehler, M., and Suppan, A. (eds.) *The Revolutions of 1989: a Handbook*. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2015, 71.; György Jenei, "The Opening of the Hungarian Border for the East German Refugees in 1989: a Public-Policy Analysis of a Key Decision". *Society and Economy*, 34(1), 2012, 163-177, https://www.jstor.org/stable/41472193, (accessed: 29 September 2020), 196.; Jakub Doležal, "Přes ambasády ke svobodě. Drama východoněmeckého exodu v roce 1989". *Soudobé Dějiny,* 21(1-2), 2014, 79-133, https://casopiskontexty.cz/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/kontexty-5-2019.pdf, (accessed: 30 April 2021), 98.
[76] Matthew Longo, *The picnic: a dream of freedom and the collapse of the Iron Curtain*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2024; Kristina Spohr, *Post Wall, Post Square: how Bush, Gorbachev, Kohl, and Deng Shaped the World After 1989*. New Haven: Yale University Press. 2020, 110-111.
[77] Sarotte, *The Collapse*, 16.

for emigration from the GDR.[78] Not only did "the emigrationists" express themselves in 1989 like members of a classic movement of disobedience, but their peaceful mission gained immediate attention from the international media, applied pressure to all authorities involved, and circumvented the need to attempt life-threatening crossings of "the Iron Curtain".[79]

The Hungarian pledge to "restructure" their state also included the signing of the Geneva Convention in June, which also helped to unravel the East German communist authorities.[80] Kristina Spohr has claimed that this was another reason why disgruntled East Germans travelled there – to enjoy the perks of the Hungarian *perestroika* which the orthodox GDR rejected.[81] Yet the reforms (such as the ratification of the Convention and the implementation of its clause of non-refoulement" in Hungary were introduced gradually, which meant that the Hungarian border guards were still to deport undocumented East Germans back to the GDR where they faced potential imprisonment for "desertion from the republic" due to bilateral travel agreements with East Germany.[82] Increasingly, however, as Spohr and Norman M. Naimark have noted, the Hungarian guards were less likely to sponsor the GDR's criminalisation of emigration and looked the other way from the borders where East Germans began "camping out nearby in order to try and try" to cross them.[83] At the end of that summer, the Hungarian leadership "recognize[d] the GDR citizens [in Hungary] as refugees" and they were allowed to leave Hungary for other countries.[84] This decision was informed by the Hungarian experiences in managing an immigration of ethnic Hungarians and Jews from Romania earlier that year and was meant to prevent international scandals following deaths at their borders.[85] This example indicates the point made by Rainer Münz, who has argued that travel

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[78] Patrick Major, *Behind the Berlin Wall: East Germany and the Frontiers of Power*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010, 218.
[79] Ibid, 217; Katarzyna Stokłosa, "Refugee Crisis in Hungary. Then and Now", 41-60. In: Besier, G. and Stokłosa, K. (eds.) *How to Deal with Refugees?: Europe as a Continent of Dreams*. Zürich: Lit, 2018, 48; Spohr, *Post Wall, Post Square*, 111.
[80] Spohr, *Post Wall, Post Square*, 109.
[81] Ibid., 149.
[82] Stephen Pfaff, "Collective Identity and Informal Groups in Revolutionary Mobilization East Germany in 1989". *Social Forces*, 75(1), 1996, 91-118, https://academic.oup.com/sf/article-abstract/75/1/91/2234233, (accessed: 3 December 2018), 106.
[83] Spohr, *Post Wall, Post Square*, 149; Norman M. Naimark "'Ich will hier raus': Emigration and the Collapse of the German Democratic Republic", 72-95. In: Banac, I., *Eastern Europe in Revolution*. Ithaca: Cornell University, 1992, 83.
[84] O'Dochartaigh, *Germany since 1945*, 184; Hertle, "The Fall of the Wall", 133.
[85] Also, an elderly Hungarian man from Romania collapsed from a heart attack at the Hungarian border earlier that year upon his forced return back to Romania by the Hungarian authorities. See: Jenei, "The Opening of the Hungarian Border for the East German Refugees in 1989", 196.

regulations were not uniform across state-socialist regimes in Europe during the Cold War, and that each state-socialist government had sufficient sovereignty over them.[86] It also attests to state-socialist sensitivities to international changes, pressures to reform and liberalise, as well as their international standing and representation.

This migration also received a prominent theoretical interest regarding its relation to the reform movements in the GDR. Albert O. Hirschman's 1970s study into the organisational relationships in a company is often held as a quintessential template guiding researchers in their studies on what happened in the GDR state-socialist system in the late 1980s. At the time of the 1989 East German mass emigration from the state, East Germany was also shaken by mass demonstrations calling for reforms and changes in/of the state authorities. Both, ultimately, are considered as responsible for the SED's fall from power. Hirschman maintained that protesters "voiced" their opposition to political stagnation and lack of reforms in the GDR, while their relatives, friends, and neighbours emigrated, thus choosing an "exit" from a deficient system they no longer tolerated. Social relations between these two groups and their diminishing "loyalty" to the regime were theorised by Hirschman in socio-economic terms. In his view, "exit" and "voice" were "two contrasting responses of consumers" to a perceived "deterioration in the quality of the goods they buy or the services and benefits they receive".[87] He claimed that as their dissatisfaction with the goods or services offered by a company grew, consumer "loyalty" dwindled and they decided to search for better ones elsewhere while others complained in order to achieve the quality of goods they desired.[88] Both emigrants and protesters withdrew their "loyalty" from the communist regime in contrasting ways.[89] Hirschman theorised that "the more pressure escapes through exit, the less is available to foment voice."[90] This juxtaposition of emigration from the GDR and dissenting

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[86] Münz, "A Continent of Migration", 201.
[87] Albert O. Hirschmann, "Exit, Voice, and the Fate of the German Democratic Republic: An Essay in Conceptual History". *World Politics*, 45(2), 1993, 173-202, https://www.jstor.org/stable/2950657, (accessed: 16 June 2021), 175.
[88] Ibid., 176.
[89] Ibid., 180.; Albert O. Hirschmann, *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970. Related discussions in: Brubaker, R., "Frontier Theses: Exit, Voice, and Loyalty in East Germany". *Migration World*, 18(3-4), 1990, 12-17; John Torpey, "Exit, Voice, and Loyalty in the 'Peaceful Revolution' in the GDR". Paper for the 17th Symposium on the German Democratic Republic, University of New Hampshire, June 1991; Christian Joppke, *East German Dissidents and the Revolution of 1989: Social Movement in a Leninist Regime*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1995.; Stephen Pfaff, "Collective Identity and Informal Groups in Revolutionary Mobilization East Germany in 1989". *Social Forces*, 75(1), 1996, 91-118, https://academic.oup.com/sf/article-abstract/75/1/91/2234233, (accessed: 3 December 2018)
[90] Hirschmann, "Exit, Voice, and the Fate of the German Democratic Republic", 180.

opposition within the regime implied the former weakened the latter, which allegedly explained why the GDR civil society was generally weak. This view also stigmatised emigrations as selfish acts, destructive in the long-term planning of state-building after protests and demonstrations are concluded.

Scholarship arguing that "exits", or emigrations, cannot solely be understood as negative concepts is especially valuable in freeing this topic from its previous conceptualisations as detrimental for the national and social fabric of a state. Commenting on its problematic use in democratic theory studies, Mark E. Warren has argued that emigration was often seen as "an undesirable alternative" to democracy when it was perceived "as common choice".[91] According to those interpretations, "exit" "atomizes collectivities and damages collective loyalties, erodes collective choice and undermines provision of common goods, encourages excessive individualism, drains collectivities of their best and brightest, and substitutes silence for voice."[92] After similar criticism and upon his own reflection on his theory in 1995, Hirschman reconsidered the two social movements of "exit" and "voice" not as competing and clashing but as reinforcing one another and both chipping away at the "loyalty" towards the GDR's establishment.[93] This reconsideration of migration may also be seen as a reconsideration of emigration as an "undesirable" option to dissent. It allows for a reinterpretation of "exit" as an ally of "voice" that strengthened the protesters' demands for basic freedoms in the GDR, of which travel was at the forefront.[94]

Later efforts in understanding what happened in Germany in 1989 were heavily engaged with Hirschman's reconceptualised model of the interplay between "exit" and "voice" in hastening the collapse of state-socialism in central Europe. For instance, Stephen Pfaff claimed that the East German migration should be understood not as a divisive social behaviour but as "the first large-scale manifestation of the widening break

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[91] Mark E. Warren, "Voting with Your Feet: Exit-based Empowerment in Democratic Theory". *The American Political Science Review*, 105(4), 2011, 683-701, https://www.jstor.org/stable/23275347, (accessed: 29 Aug 2022), 683-4.
[92] Ibid.
[93] Albert O. Hirschman, *A Propensity to Self-Subversion*. Cambridge, Mass.; London: Harvard University Press, 1995, 12-13: Detlef Pollack's critique.
[94] Karl-Dieter Opp and Christiane Gern, "Dissident Groups, Personal Networks, and Spontaneous Cooperation: The East German Revolution of 1989". *American Sociological Review*, 58(5), 1993, 659-680, http://www.jstor.org/stable/2096280, (accessed: 13 June 2021); Christian Joppke, *East German Dissidents and the Revolution of 1989: Social Movement in a Leninist Regime*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1995.; Stephen Pfaff, "Collective Identity and Informal Groups in Revolutionary Mobilization East Germany in 1989". *Social Forces*, 75(1), 1996, 91-118, https://academic.oup.com/sf/article-abstract/75/1/91/2234233, (accessed: 3 December 2018), 96.

that many East Germans had made with the regime".[95] In this sense, emigration was dissent and a mass protest. Norman M. Naimark has similarly contended that the East German emigration was what "started the revolution [in the GDR]; the demands of the crowd for basic political freedoms were what sustained it".[96] Hans-Hermann Hertle has also challenged the idea of this migration as a collective action and stressed migrants' individualism in choosing emigration over protests.[97] Adding to Naimark's argument, Hertle argued that East German migrants had varied motivations for their emigration, which highlights their personhood as a core element allowing to view the whole migration process through it as well.[98] Other scholars, such as John Torpey and Ilko-Sascha Kowalczuk, have considered that the "exit" was not simply an alternative to "voice" or its support but its very condition – without a mass emigration, socially and politically marginal opposition associations in the GDR had little space for effective action in the regime that harassed, jailed, and deported its "troublemakers".[99] Corey Ross, Pfaff, and Hertle have generally maintained that both movements "rejected the parameters of dialogue offered by the regime" in their unique ways and "undermined the [GDR] regime's authority" because any proposed changes in the GDR politics meant an unthinkable change of the GDR more broadly.[100]

Looking at this topic from the Czechoslovak perspective, Oldřich Tůma's research also engaged with A. O. Hirschmann's revised theory of the "voice", "exit", and "loyalty". Tůma argued against it by claiming that it functioned almost perfectly until the first major anti-government demonstrations across the GDR broke out.[101] Analysing demonstrators' social roles in the events of 1989, Tůma argued that their initial demand

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[95] Pfaff, "Collective Identity and Informal Groups in Revolutionary Mobilization East Germany in 1989", 101.
[96] Naimark M. Naimark, "'Ich will hier raus': Emigration and the Collapse of the German Democratic Republic", 93.
[97] Hans-Hermann Hertle, "The Fall of the Wall: The Unintended Self-Dissolution of East Germany's Ruling Regime". *Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, 12/13, 2001, 131-164, https://zzf-potsdam.de/sites/default/files/mitarbeiter/hertle/2009_04_08_cwihp_bulletin_12_hertle_fall_wall.pdf, (accessed: 9 April 2020), 133.
[98] Ibid; See also: Naimark M. Naimark, "'Ich will hier raus'", 84.
[99] John Torpey, "Two Movements, Not a Revolution. Exodus and Opposition in the East German Transformation, 1989-1990". *German Politics & Society*, 26, 1992, 21–42, http://www.jstor.org/stable/23734965, (accessed: 25 October 2023), 23.; Ilko-Sascha Kowalczuk, "Rewolucja 1989 roku w NRD". *Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość*, 2(18), 2011, 197-216, http://cejsh.icm.edu.pl/cejsh/element/bwmeta1.element.desklight-c9c7dc23-4043-4cf1-ad96-367f88356ca6, (accessed: 23 September 2019), 210.
[100] Ross, *The East German Dictatorship*, 145; Pfaff, "Collective Identity and Informal Groups in Revolutionary Mobilization East Germany in 1989", 96.; Hertle, "The Fall of the Wall", 134.
[101] Oldřich Tůma, "9:00, Praha-Libeň horní nádraží: Exodus východních němců přes prahu v září 1989". *Soudobé Dějiny*, VI(2-3), 1999, 147-165, http://www.usd.cas.cz/casopis/soudobe-dejiny-2-3-1999/, (accessed: 8 April 2019), 148.

was the liberalisation of the GDR's strict travel regulations.[102] His focus on protesters as individuals revealed that many East Germans went to protest because their emigration applications were turned down while others emigrated because they saw demonstrations as ineffective methods of "voicing" their ambitions to "exit". Therefore, distinctions between "exit" and "voice" blurred in reality: emigration was protest and protesters could become emigrants at different stages of their prolonged falling out with the GDR regime in 1989. This thesis similarly agrees that varied and individual reasoning behind emigrants' choice of "exit" over "voice" stirred people to action. It also does not underestimate the power of a collective expression of individuals' "voice" and "exit" in encouraging changes and reforms of the GDR regime. Hence, academic scholarship is not united on the issue of the migration's scale, compositional unity, or even impact despite agreeing on its significance, thus positioning the 1989 East German migration west as a complex process and topic of study. This lack of consensus may explain its general marginalisation in related literature on the end of the Cold War in Europe.

2. 2. Politics of transit via Czechoslovakia and Poland

Instead of restricting human movement or punishing emigrants for their assumed crime of emigration, the Hungarian leadership enabled and permitted East Germans to go west. Yet in order to use this opportunity, the emigration route led East Germans through Czechoslovakia and Poland. Disciplinary and methodological paths previous studies have taken thus far in order to understand the 1989 East German migration had largely settled on the perspective that it was an internationally influenced but nationally significant event for the German states.[103] This thesis contests this matter – it was a transnational process of major significance that developed across several nation-states and their borders, and was entangled in their histories, politics, languages, and cultures. It argues that the 1989 East German transit west should be explored as part of Czechoslovak and Polish past as a multilingual, transnational, and multimedia process. This argument is inspired by Simo Mikkonen and Pia Koivunen's call to study allegedly marginal Cold War European states, which "were independent actors that harboured intentions and objectives beyond the superpower axis".[104] This thesis recognises the immense social, political, and cultural

[102] Ibid.
[103] Gareth Dale, *Popular protest in East Germany, 1945-1989*. London; New York: Routledge, 2005, 140.; Katarzyna Stokłosa, "Refugee Crisis in Hungary", 44.
[104] Simo Mikkonen and Pia Koivunen, "Beyond the Divide", 1-23. In: Mikkonen, S. and Koivunen, P. (eds.) *Beyond the Divide: Entangled Histories of Cold War Europe*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2015, 2.

wealth analyses of smaller socialist and capitalist states bring to the Cold War discussions beyond the typical studies on the Soviet Union or the United States of America.

Border changes are important to consider in highlighting the importance of the state-socialist response to the East German migration west in 1989. Vilém Prečan dissected political relations between the two German states and the Czechoslovak Communist Party (*Komunistická strana Československa*, KSČ).[105] In just six months, this migration had also contributed to speeding up the Party's own political crisis, Prečan argued.[106] He analysed political telegrams and secret State Security situation reports gathered for the Party ministers' daily briefings on the developments in the country which indicated the Party members' increasing focus on the East German migration west via Prague. The intense international media focus their stay in the country's capital attracted had pushed its authorities into active participation in related diplomatic negotiations.[107] Prečan's focus on the inner decision-making process within the top Party elites offers one of the reasons why the Czechoslovak input in managing this migration was significant to its development and outcome. As he found, Pavel Sadovský, Czechoslovak First Deputy Foreign Minister, was instructed by the KSČ leadership to deliver an ultimatum to the GDR authorities via its Ambassador to Czechoslovakia, Helmut Ziebart, on the 8th of November 1989.[108] It urged the GDR authorities to open their own frontiers with the FRG instead of allowing emigrants to gather in the territory of Czechoslovakia.[109] The response to this ultimatum was the unintentional opening of the Berlin Wall the next day during a now-famous press conference led by the under-informed Günther Schabowski.[110] This argument isolates Czechoslovak decision-making processes as essential in the stability of the GDR. Nevertheless, there is merit to the suggestion that the Czechoslovak incapability to control this migration on their territory and impatience with East German authorities to handle made history as the German-German border was opened.

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[105] Vilém Prečan, "Through Prague to Freedom. The Exodus of GDR Citizens through Czechoslovakia to the Federal Republic of Germany, September 30 - November 10, 1989". *National Security Archive*, 2009, http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB294/essay.htm (accessed: 19 November 2016).
[106] Ibid.
[107] Ibid.
[108] Ibid.
[109] Ibid.
[110] Julia Sonnevend, *Stories without Borders: The Berlin Wall and the Making of a Global Iconic Event*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018: Sonnevend tracks the details of the conference in chapter 4 of her book.

Other accounts claimed that the "fall of the Wall" began even earlier in November. Jakub Doležal maintained that the Czechoslovak border opening with the FRG on the 3rd of November – the first such direct opening of borders to a capitalist state – was the "moment when the Berlin Wall essentially lost its purpose" because "whoever wanted to emigrate from the GDR, could".[111] This statement sensationalises this migration and portrays it in simplistic terms which suggest that all East Germans, regardless of their personal circumstances, could or would emigrate. It also betrays a bias regarding the inevitability of fall of the East German dictatorship.[112] Despite this exaggerated claim, this research contextualised the 1989 East German migration by introducing a historical comparative dimension of East German emigration via Prague in 1984.[113] Then, between September 1984 and January 1985, "almost two hundred refugees" sheltered in the FRG diplomatic mission in Prague as they sought to speed-up their emigration process, which they achieved.[114] Among those leaving the GDR then was Willi Stoph's niece Ingrid Berg with her family, and as relatives of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, their case attracted significant media interest.[115] Doležal's study is also valuable because he discussed the FRG statistical data migrants provided upon their arrival there and noted that their motivations for emigration largely correlated with those of 1984.[116] Among dominant reasons for emigration were shortages – of housing, consumer goods, employees, services, human rights protections, the GDR leadership's political and social reforms, and solutions to improving the GDR's worsening environmental conditions.[117] In 1989, East German emigrants, however, claimed their discontent and distrust of the GDR regime's promises of change and reform had increased. Doležal's "geographic and time synthesis", as he defined it, comparatively contextualised East German emigrations within the Czechoslovak-German relations in the 1980s and found varied reasons behind their decision to leave East Germany.[118]

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[111] Jakub Doležal, "Německo a (versus) Německo: vztahy mezi Spolkovou Republikou Německo a NDR ve čtyřúhelníku Bonn – Východní Berlín – Praha – Moskva v závěru studené války". PhD Thesis. [Prague: Charles University, 2015], https://dspace.cuni.cz/handle/20.500.11956/82583, (accessed: 5 April 2019), 186.
[112] Katja Hoyer, *Beyond the Wall: East Germany, 1949-1990*. London: Allen Lane, 2023: Hoyer dispels the inevitability of the collapse of the regime in 1989 throughout her book.
[113] Jakub Doležal, "Přes ambasády ke svobodě. drama východoněmeckého exodu v roce 1989". *Soudobé Dějiny,* 21(1-2), 2014, 79-133, https://casopiskontexty.cz/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/kontexty-5-2019.pdf, (accessed: 30 April 2021), 105; Jakub Doležal, "Německo a (versus) Německo", 211-222.
[114] Doležal, "Německo a (versus) Německo", 57, 59.
[115] Ibid., 58.
[116] Doležal, "Přes ambasády ke svobodě", 82, 86, 87.
[117] Ibid.
[118] Doležal, 79-80.

The Polish route of the 1989 East German migration received only token mentions in the majority of related publications thus far. It became very important in the 1989 East German migration in October when visa-requirement was brought back by the GDR authorities for the Czechoslovak-GDR border crossings as emigration attempts did not cease. Yet whereas the Czechoslovak case received a dedicated space in almost every English, Czech, and Polish language publication considered in this review of scholarship, the Polish one has largely eluded academic scrutiny. One potential explanation for this, according to Doležal, was that the migration in Poland and Warsaw "played out somewhat in the shadow of the events in Prague" as fewer migrants came there due to the visa requirements for the GDR residents aiming to cross the Polish borders.[119] Perhaps because of this migration's smaller scale in Warsaw, or maybe despite it, Doležal argued that the Polish government was more welcoming to East Germans than the Czechoslovak authorities.[120] Politically, its authorities have been more understanding: they brokered a deal with East Germany that allowed those sheltering in Warsaw to reside elsewhere than the FRG Embassy in Warsaw, and made it possible for the migrants to renounce their citizenship at the GDR diplomatic mission, apply for FRG citizenship at the Embassy, and fly out to West Germany.[121] Prague followed Warsaw's suit from the end of October, which showed Poland's lead in the decision-making process regarding this migration.[122] Nevertheless, as a study with comparative elements, a representational imbalance was visible in Doležal's "geographic synthesis" because the Polish route was afforded only its key political and diplomatic milestones while its social and cultural aspects remained outside of the research focus. This thesis looks eastward in much greater detail as its comparative analysis posits the Polish route as essential in any study into the press discourse and narratives of the 1989 East German emigration west.

Available publications on the Polish route of the East German migration west generally adopted similar political and historical perspectives employed to discuss the Czechoslovak route. Analyses of the Polish response to this migration demonstrate the implications it had for the new power balance and political priorities in the semi-democratic Polish coalition government at the very start of its own liberal democratic transition from an authoritarian system. Katarzyna Stokłosa has argued that the East German migration in Warsaw from mid-September of 1989 pressured the new Polish

[119] Doležal, "Německo a (versus) Německo", 124.
[120] Ibid., 177.
[121] Ibid.
[122] Ibid.

government to adjust its "loyalty towards the GDR on the one hand, and sympathy for the plight of the refugees on the other", especially with regards to its border operations.[123] The new Polish government was a coalition of the Polish United Workers' Party (*Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza*, PZPR), which held important ministerial positions, and the oppositional, independent trade union "Solidarność" ("Solidarity"). Stokłosa's research made use of archived communications, interviews, and memoirs of the political leaders of 1989, among other sources, and argued that this migration forced the new government to adjust its priorities which was particularly difficult to achieve. Divisions already marked the general composition of the new semi-democratic Poland as non-partisan Krzysztof Skubiszewski became Poland's new Foreign Minister in Tadeusz Mazowiecki's ("Solidarność") government in August, 1989, and the Ministry of the Interior, responsible for Poland's borders, was under the PZPR's Czesław Kiszczak.[124] They could not agree on a joint plan to manage the East German migration through Poland and, according to Stokłosa, while both Mazowiecki and Skubiszewski sympathised with the migrants' cause, they worked on establishing favourable diplomatic relations with the FRG and tried to comply with the bilateral Polish-East German travel agreements, upheld by Kiszczak. Their most important clause, identical to those also applying to Hungary and Czechoslovakia, instructed the Polish border guards to engage in the so-called push-back policy towards East Germans caught emigrating without GDR-approved documents.[125] This practice indicated that although the "Solidarność" members, forming the new Polish government, were initially perceived by western democratic leaders as "icons" of civic resistance and liberalism in east Europe, their domestic policies remained aligned with their communist predecessors, at least initially. Robert Brier has recently pointed out that it was so because their general mission had little to do with international support of human rights and more with domestic "classic labour demands" as a trade union which amassed diverse membership and interests.[126] This thesis expects that the

[123] Katarzyna Stokłosa, "Escape Routes to Freedom: Via Budapest, Prague and Warsaw to the Federal Republic of Germany", 187-200. In: Gaitanides, Ch. and Grözinger, G. (eds.) *Diversity in Europe*. Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 2015, 194.
[124] Stokłosa, "Escape Routes to Freedom", 193.
[125] Jan Olaszek, "Przystanek Warszawa. Ucieczki z NRD przez Polskę w 1989 r.", 147-164. In: Patryk Pleskot, *Cudzoziemcy w Warszawie 1945–1989. Studia i materiały*. Warszawa: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, 2012, 158-159: over 400 East Germans were sent back to the GDR where they faced charges for their "illegal" border crossing and a 2,5-year prison sentence until the agreement that enabled this policy was terminated in the late September 1989.
[126] Robert Brier, *Poland's Solidarity Movement and the Global Politics of Human Rights*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2021, 8, 9.

selected Polish newspapers reflected tensions among the Polish political factions in the East German migration portrayals as well.

Scholarly analyses of the East German migration west in 1989 via Poland also included reflections on the new Poland's international commitments to and historical relations with both iterations of the German state. This thematic strand did not feature in publications which considered the Czechoslovak route.[127] For instance, Erhard Cziomer maintained that "historical conflicts with the German people" clouded the judgement of Poland's new government in 1989.[128] Stokłosa referred to Janusz Reiter, a "Solidarność" activist, editor of the newspaper *Życie Warszawy*, and later Poland's ambassador to Germany, who claimed that at that time "Poland still felt in the dark as to what the Federal Republic of Germany imagined Poland's future role in Europe might be".[129] This shows the perception of Polish dependency on other political processes in Europe, dominated by West Germany, and helps explain Poland's reluctance to open its borders to East Germans like Hungary did, as noted by Ilko-Sascha Kowalczuk.[130] However, scholars did not specify how historical Polish-German relations may have manifested or informed the actions taken by the new Polish government or the Poles themselves as a response to the East German migration via Warsaw. It could be argued that the coalitional PZPR and "Solidarność" government's decision to liberalise its travel regulations for the migrants and provide humanitarian aid while they stayed in and around Warsaw marked Poland's transition "from the dark", to reiterate Reiter's observation. Nevertheless, as Cziomer maintained, its past with both German states conditioned the new government's judgements and its self-perception in the European Cold War order. This serves as an intriguing point of comparison with the Czechoslovak press narratives and representations of this migration.

2. 2. 1. Social and cultural considerations

It is hardly surprising that research based in international relations, politics, and history dominates the academic enquiries in the 1989 East German migration. After all, the Cold War was marked by intense geopolitical power clashes among the countries that formed

[127] Doležal's contributions comes closest to considering the Czechoslovak-German historical relations.
[128] Erhard Cziomer, "Rola Ericha Honeckera w rozwoju politycznym Niemieckiej Republiki Demokratycznej w latach 1971-1989". *Odmiany Współczesnej Nauki o Polityce*, 2, 2014, 151-171, https://ruj.uj.edu.pl/xmlui/handle/item/253755, (accessed: 22 January 2021), 164.
[129] Stokłosa, "Escape Routes to Freedom", 190.
[130] Kowalczuk, "Rewolucja 1989 roku w NRD", 210.

its system, and diplomacy was often an effective means that prevented major political imbalances in it (as well as caused them).[131] Yet political accounts of this migration can only tell us so much – decisions reached regarding migration development, announcements of border openings and closings, and proclamations allowing East German migrants to go to third countries. These findings help establish the chronology of the migration and show political responsibility for its management but do not question the knowledge-construction practices which may have informed those decisions and reached beyond crisis diplomacy.

The 1989 press documented this migration as one of the most important media events of the year. It constructed and shared social perceptions about emigrating East Germans, their Czechoslovak and Polish hosts, and the future of both German states. Scholarly contributions on the Polish route claimed the new Polish government and society's response to the East German migrants' plight involved better-documented practices of empathy and local hospitality. Jan Olaszek claimed that local Warsaw residents provided East Germans with food, warm clothes, and private accommodation around Warsaw, as well as worried about the migrants' wellbeing and future.[132] Olaszek paid attention to local press, such as the "Solidarność" weekly *Tygodnik Solidarność,* and supported his claims with interviews with local Warsaw residents.[133] He found that East Germans in Warsaw were "satisfied, happy and full of hope that they will find a place for themselves in West Germany" or "anywhere else", just "not in the GDR."[134] Other scholars, such as Katarzyna Stokłosa, questioned the extent of altruism in the Polish practices of hospitality expressed towards East Germans.[135] She found that the FRG mission took on all associated costs incurred in providing shelter and aid for East Germans in Warsaw, which "demythologise[s] the events of the summer and autumn of 1989" in Poland.[136] Unconditional altruism could be interpreted through the prism of the preferred Polish self-representation as a society of selflessly friendly and caring

[131] Patrick Major and Rana Mitter, "East is East and West is West? Towards a comparative socio-cultural history of the Cold War". *Cold War History*, 4(1), 2003, 1-22, https://doi.org/10.1080/14682740312331391714, (accessed: 24 April 2021), 2-3.
[132] Olaszek, "Przystanek Warszawa". 154.
[133] Ibid..
[134] Ibid., 157.
[135] Stokłosa, "Escape Routes to Freedom", 191.
[136] Ibid., 195.

individuals, even of Germans – their alleged historic enemies.[137] As such, the narrative of the Polish welcome should be approached cautiously and critically. As her and Olaszek's accounts show, social and cultural considerations in analyses of the East German migration west via Warsaw open up additional avenues for further study. They allow for a glimpse into the new Polish realities of 1989 through the representations of the new Poland and their historical "others" – the familiar (East) Germans – and to seek comparison with Czechoslovakia.

Among the accounts which addressed the social dimensions of the East German migration west via Prague, Oldřich Tůma's is the most comprehensive one.[138] Tůma's enquiry illuminates an intertwined and nuanced web of social relations and responses to the East German transit west via Czechoslovakia. He employed different research sources, such as oral history accounts, letters to the editors of the main Czechoslovak newspaper *Rudé Právo*, and daily public opinion polls curated by the Czechoslovak secret police for the Party leadership regarding this migration. [139] He found that Czechoslovaks may have supported or ignored East Germans out of animosity for their own government which was hostile to them. Interviewees claimed that they were "very happy for them" (East Germans), "glad that they left their "Trabant" cars everywhere" and were "messing everything up". [140] Tůma also referenced Karel Čermák's article of the time in the Czechoslovak unofficial "samizdat" newspaper *Lidové Noviny*.[141] Aptly titled "What kind of people are we?", Čermák captured and questioned an array of different views and feelings expressed by ordinary Czechoslovaks and members of dissident associations towards East Germans. Tůma claimed that during the "refugee wave", as he defined it, "a very interesting combination of affinity and animosity, attempts to help [the migrants],

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[137] Brian A. Porter, "The Social Nation and Its Futures: English Liberalism and Polish Nationalism in Late Nineteenth-Century Warsaw". *The American Historical Review*, 101(5), 1996, 1470–1492, https://doi.org/10.1086/ahr/101.5.1470, (accessed: 6 December 2022); Aleksander Gomola, "Godly Poland in Godless Europe: Catholic-Nationalist Discourse in Poland after 2004", 75-101, in: Šarić, L. and Stanojević, M.-M. (eds.) *Metaphor, Nation and Discourse*. Amsterdam; Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2019.
[138] Oldřich Tůma, "9:00, "Praha-Libeň, horní nádraží: exodus východních němců přes prahu v září 1989". *Soudobé dějiny*, 6(2/3), 1999, 147-164, http://www.usd.cas.cz/casopis/soudobe-dejiny-2-3-1999/, (accessed: 8 April 2019).
[139] Ibid., 162.
[140] Ibid.
[141] Ibid, 149.; Karel Čermák, "Jací jsme?". *Lidové noviny*, 2(10), October 1989, https://www.lidovky.cz/historie-obrazem?objekt=popup&datum=1989_10&stranka=1, (accessed: 12 February 2022), 4.; Lubomír Kopeček, "Za svobodou přes komunistické Československo. Příběh východoněmeckých uprchlíků v Praze a jeho dopady". *Kontexty*, 11(5), 2019, 3-10, https://casopiskontexty.cz/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/kontexty-5-2019.pdf, (accessed: 14 June 2021): refers to both Tůma and Čermák at length.

vigilance, human compassion, [and] spitefulness" were present among the Prague observers of this migration and East Germans, arriving and sheltering at the West German diplomatic mission in the capital.[142] These negative views of locals regarding the East German migration could be attributed to an assumption that (East) Germans lived better than Czechoslovaks. However, historic grievances were also present. One elderly person even claimed that "all Germans are vermin" and he "would shoot them".[143] Several of these responses might have been influenced by negative views towards the Czechoslovak government and negative historical experiences and politically motivated historical narratives employed by the Czechoslovak communists in power against "the Germans" as ultimate historical villains during the course the Czechoslovak statehood. Nevertheless, Tůma concluded that their transit via Prague to the FRG marked "a happier episode in the Czech and German history" because locals did assist humanitarian organisations providing help to the migrants.[144]

Another important finding in research by Tůma was that Czechoslovaks appeared "clearly sorrowful" that "another Czechoslovakia" did not exist – unlike another Germany.[145] This finding demonstrates clearly that analysing local press on this migration hides surprising and valuable information about the Cold War societies and their mindsets. This yearning for a division into the Czechoslovak equivalent of the GDR and the FRG was portrayed as a welcome development. While majority of English Cold War scholarship employed in this research lamented the division of Germany, the view that Czechoslovaks would express a longing for an alternative but linguistically and historically similar, better Czechoslovakia, was unexpected and novel. This view could also be understood as displaying admiration and even jealousy of the migrants' privilege of choice, agency, and bravery to change their lives. According to Čermák, parts of the Czechoslovak society "were affected by this phenomenon [migration] more strongly" than by what unfolded during the last phases of the one-party political systems in Poland and Hungary.[146] These responses depict support, even if romanticised, for defiance and change of the communist regime. Whether East Germans emigrated for opportunities,

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[142] Ibid.
[143] Tůma, "9:00, Praha-Libeň, horní nádraží", 149: Original phrases used in the article were "Všichni Němci jsou verbež, followed by "Já bych je postřílel", which gave the comment a sinister undertone.
[144] Tůma, "9:00, Praha-Libeň, horní nádraží", 164.
[145] Ibid.
[146] Čermák, "Jací jsme?". 4; Lubomír Kopeček, "Za svobodou přes komunistické Československo. Příběh východoněmeckých uprchlíků v Praze a jeho dopady". *Kontexty*, 11(5), 2019, 3-10, https://casopiskontexty.cz/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/kontexty-5-2019.pdf, (accessed: 14 June 2021), 9.

families, friends, or in search for a (lost or new) home, their Czechoslovak neighbours wished they could do that, too.

The Czechoslovak independent associations' response to this migration differed from the previously stated ones. At times, it was seldom better than that of the Party elites they claimed to counter, as becomes evident from Čermák, Tůma, and Lubomír Kopeček's contributions.[147] Both academics referred to Čermák's article at length, so it constitutes the most discussed news report in existing scholarship on this migration. Čermák claimed that the media of that time was devoted to covering it as "photographers ran out of film" and "reporters ran out of words" in trying to capture the presence of thousands of East Germans in Prague.[148] Tůma and Kopeček agreed with him that, despite this press interest, no local civic initiatives went beyond verbal expressions of solidarity with East German migrants.[149] They argued that Charta 77 (Charter 77) was generally passive about this migration. Their spokespeople defined the situation around the crowded Prague's FRG Embassy as "abnormal" which was exactly the word the Czechoslovak and East German communist establishments used to describe it.[150] Although they pleaded with the Czechoslovak communist government "to help resolve the situation, including following the Hungarian pattern of opening borders for refugees to the West, or at least providing more space outside the [FRG] Embassy", no actions followed.[151] Thus, speaking the language of power, Charta 77 was "not mentally prepared" to consider this migration as "something essential for them", Kopeček wrote.[152] Indeed, Kopeček claimed that any act of welcome and support were of the individual nature as he quoted Václav Havel saying that "this is a matter for individual Chartists, whose conscience tells them to do something".[153] This inaction was justified insofar as yearning to keep the image of Charta 77 away from appearing as "feed[ing] on any wave of popular solidarity" was concerned.[154] In other words, out of a multitude of potential reasons for such a stance, members of the Czechoslovak Charta 77 focused on

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[147] Kopeček, "Za svobodou přes komunistické Československo", 8.; also in: Draus, J. and Szymanowski, M. (eds.) *Zanim upadł mur berliński. Węgry, Czechosłowacja i Polska wobec uchodźców z komunistycznej NRD w 1989 r.* Varšava: Wydawnictwo Sejmowe, 2019.; Čermák, "Jací jsme?", 4.
[148] Čermák, "Jací jsme?", 4.
[149] Ibid.
[150] Ibid.; Beatrice Michalovska, '*The Prague Exit': representations of East German migration in the official press of the Czechoslovak Communist Party in 1989*. [MPhil. Glasgow: University of Glasgow, 2017], http://theses.gla.ac.uk/30736/: 51.
[151] Čermák, "Jací jsme?", 4.
[152] Kopeček, "Za svobodou přes komunistické Československo", 8.
[153] Ibid.
[154] Ibid.

Czechoslovakia and refrained from expressing active and political solidarity with East German migrants.[155] Čermák held that "the migration episode" revealed "weaknesses of our civic movement" that laid bare "its intellectual origins, verbalism, impracticality, preoccupation with self and lack of empathy for all that does not concern it directly."[156] As such, collective actions towards alleviating the migrants' strife in Prague in the form of "actual help (shelters for mothers with children, provision of warm drinks, etc.)", was "spontaneous" and individual.[157]

Prior to this research, my own case study combined historical archival research with a limited media analysis of the official rhetoric of the Czechoslovak Communist Party in its newspaper *Rudé Právo* (RP) and considered it together with the Czechoslovak State Security situation reports of 1989 East German migration in Prague. It featured a limited analysis of English language news reports on this migration in *The Washington Post* and *The Times* which provided insight into wider Cold War informational dimensions against which I could interpret the Czechoslovak communist propaganda.[158] The East German migrant representations were informed by Marxist-Leninist rhetoric which largely depicted East Germans as traitors to the socialist state and deceitful "economic migrants". They were discursively "othered" from the rest of the East German residents who remained in the country as well as from Czechoslovak citizens who observed this process in order to depict emigration as a criminal and undesirable act.[159] The legal term "citizens of the GDR", employed in RP, served as an imposition of the GDR leadership's political and legal authority over the migrants in Czechoslovakia as per their socialist-alliance obligations.[160] I compared those representations with the bureaucratic linguistic constructions in daily state security situation reports compiled for briefing the Czechoslovak Communist Party elites. Concerns over state security and fears for the decrease of their own population due to a potential emigration indicated the waning political stability of the Party elites just before the events of the 17th of November in 1989. My analysis of the English language news reports revealed a diametrically opposed

[155] There could be many reasons for this stance, such as fear of appearing politically active as dissidents were jailed and harassed in Czechoslovakia by the secret police, as well as a self-representation as a national association and not a pan-European movement.
[156] Čermák, "Jací jsme?", 4.
[157] Tůma, "9:00, Praha-Libeň, horní nádraží", 149.
[158] Beatrice Michalovska, *'The Prague Exit': Representations of East German Migration in the Official Press of the Czechoslovak Communist Party in 1989*, [MPhil. Glasgow: University of Glasgow, 2017], http://theses.gla.ac.uk/30736/, (accessed: 24 Nov 2021), 66-77.
[159] Ibid.
[160] Ibid.

representation of migrants as victims of cruel state-socialist dictatorships. Traditional Cold War conflict frames used to interpret this migration in the selected press pushed the migrants' story into the margins of the "superpower" diplomacy narrative. Crucially, East German representations in the Czechoslovak and English language sources showed a shared self-perception of both "the East" and "the West" as morally superior to one another at the expense of East German migration story.

Despite expanding the disciplinary and methodological paths to study the 1989 East German migration, that project did not offer a geographically and linguistically comparative approach to this migration which included its depictions in the Polish press. It did not consider that this migration was transnational and multilingual in its development and press coverage. There were many local newspapers which brought information about this migration to the doorstep of curious Czechoslovaks and Poles, so its informational system of representations and narratives requires further investigation to determine the shared and contrasting practices of migration knowledge construction in two former allies whose paths diverged so drastically in the summer and autumn of 1989. Although the accounts discussed above reveal insightful attempts to write a socially-considerate account of the 1989 East German migration west, current scholarship on the topic falls short of answering the main research questions of this thesis focusing on the textual and visual migrant identity representations in the selected 1989 Czech, Polish, and English language press and the comparison of the transnational press narratives which supported those representations and defined their meanings. This thesis approaches this topic from interdisciplinary, multilingual, and comparative perspectives by shifting the focus to the transnational informational aspects of this migration as a process that developed and left its mark in Czechoslovakia and Poland.

2. 3. Conclusion

The 1989 East German migration is predominantly conceptualised in the related scholarship historically and politically as a diplomatic event and a crisis. Cultural and social reflections as well as the use of alternative research conceptualisations, methods, and sources remain scarce. However, the Cold War press and social relations it continuously represented, reproduced, and recontextualised should receive more space in the scholarship on this transnational and multilingual migration. To date, publications on the 1989 East German migration in Poland and Czechoslovakia approach this migration similarly to the topic of the end of the Cold War itself – through historical lenses, with

the support of formerly secret archival sources, such as official telegrams and memos on meetings and agreements reached between political leaders and their representatives. Those accounts stress the national significance of this migration for the German states and their following reunification. Despite acknowledging its international influences, current academic evaluations of the roles of Czechoslovak or Polish politicians involved in the development and management of this migration as decision-makers and not order-takers have only begun to grasp the fact that its centres were not in Bonn and Berlin, but in Prague and Warsaw, where the migrants waited for months to go west. Existing social and cultural reflections do not approach this emigration as a process of mass-communication where preferred migration narratives and selected migrant identity representations continuously tried to make and un-make East Germans in Prague and Warsaw as objects of a public discourse. The following chapter of this thesis charts out theoretical and methodological pathways this thesis adopted to explore, analyse, and explain Polish, Czechoslovak, and English press practices of conceptualising and representing the 1989 East German migration west.

3. RESEARCH APPROACH

This chapter outlines the methodology of this qualitative, interdisciplinary, multilingual, and comparative thesis that analyses the textual and visual constructions of the East German migrants' identities and their migration narratives reproduced in the selected 1989 English, Czech, and Polish language press. The research approach is informed by historical Cold War, migration, and media studies in order to rethink the end of the Cold War as a time of migrations and not solely of revolutions. This research is guided by the following research questions: how did the representations of the East German migrants compare in the selected 1989 Czech, Polish, and English language press? What kind of migration narratives emerged in the press and how did they support those representations? This thesis argues that the East German migration through Czechoslovakia and Poland to the Federal Republic of Germany was a multilingual and transnational process of encounters that was represented in the national Polish and Czechoslovak press as well as international English language media. As a major news story, it also brought to the fore uncomfortable questions pertaining to their identity, political spaces, and state borders. That is why representations and narratives of this migration cannot be fully grasped only as a diplomatic crisis or solely as a part of German history. This chapter begins with a reflection on the most suitable research design this thesis chose to answer the abovementioned research questions. Then it proceeds with a discussion of the theoretical underpinnings which help interpret migrants' identity representations and migration narratives in the press. It focuses on the core notions of identity, migration spaces, and borders that are significant for this work. Finally, the chapter discusses Cold War rhetoric and the news sources employed in this thesis that exemplify the ideologically charged linguistic context of this migration reporting. It explains how this particular exploration of the multilingual sources, identities, and narratives of the East German migration west via Prague and Warsaw, viewed from the interdisciplinary and comparative perspectives, enriches our understanding of one of the most explosive news stories of 1989 further and contributes to social and cultural scholarship on the Cold War.

3. 1. Research design: on narrative and representation

A qualitative research design and social constructivist approach are well-suited to help interpret the findings of this research. Reiner Keller claimed that "different kinds of knowledge and rival ways of knowing" form the tools people use to understand and

interpret their social reality.[161] As such, interpretations and perceptions guide us through its complex processes such as migrations. Ricard Zapata-Barrero and Evren Yalaz argued that "most migration-related problems have to do with how people perceive them", and the analysis of perceptions is at the core of this work.[162] Thus, the exploration of the meanings behind the representations of the East German migrants' identities and their migration narratives requires a qualitative research design. Defined by John W. Creswell as allowing one to study "the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem", this design helps to make sense of the potential plurality and subjectivity of those representations.[163] It allows us to "explore in detail how people, organisations, and structures shape the reality where they exist and how far all the reality is conceptually mediated", which also ties well with the constructivist approach this thesis takes.[164] According to Zapata-Barrero and Yalaz, policies, narratives, and practices related to migration are always politically and socially constructed – linguistic and political practices of naming, labelling, and defining migrations and migrants are no exception.[165] As Daniel Chandler explained, social constructivism "assume[s] that our sign-systems (language and other media) play a major part" in our perceptions and constructions of social reality.[166] These constructions may facilitate the social inclusion of migrants in their transit and host communities through positive commentary, thus de-problematising migrations as a normal social phenomenon as opposed to its usual treatment as an exception and a crisis.[167] The media tends to sensationalise migration and portray migrants through lenses of difference as an intrinsically negative trait, thereby stereotyping migrations and spreading prejudice against migrants as unsettling and unwanted figures of society.[168] Against this trend, this thesis accounts for and

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[161] Reiner Keller, "The Sociology of Knowledge Approach to Discourse. An Introduction", 16-48, In: Keller, R., Hornidge, A.-K., and Schünemann, W. J. (eds.) *The Sociology of Knowledge Approach to Discourse: Investigating the Politics of Knowledge and Meaning-making*. Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY: Routledge, 2018, 17.
[162] Ricard Zapata-Barrero and Evren Yalaz, "Qualitative Methods in Migration Research", chapter 25. In: Scholten, P. (ed.), *Introduction to Migration Studies: an Interactive Guide to the Literatures on Migration and Diversity*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2022, 411.
[163] John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. 4th ed. Los Angeles; London; New Delhi; Singapore; Washington DC: SAGE, 2014, 32.
[164] Ricard Zapata-Barrero and Evren Yalaz, "Qualitative Methods in Migration Research", 412.
[165] Ibid.
[166] Daniel Chandler, *Semiotics. The Basics.* 2nd ed. London and New York: Routledge, 2007, xv.
[167] Darrin Hodgetts and Kerry Chamberlain, "Analysing News Media", 380-393. In: Flick, U. (ed.) *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2013, https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781446282243, (accessed: 20 April 2022), 381.
[168] Lilie Chouliaraki, Myria Georgiou, and Rafal Zaborowski, "The European "Migration Crisis" and the Media: A Cross-European Press Content Analysis". Report. London: the London School of Economics and Political Science, 2017, http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/id/eprint/84670, (accessed: 20 April 2022), 27.

demonstrates complexities of migration representations and the stories that sustain them to highlight the biases in perceptions which surround them.

The 1989 East German migration reporting in the selected Czech, Polish, and English press is perceived here as a story with a traceable beginning (May 1989), culmination (September 1989), and an end (November 1989). Each selected newspaper reported on this migration differently, thus constructing several migration narratives. Anna De Fina maintained that "narratives are often used to express and negotiate both individual and collective identities" which "emerge through semiotic processes in which people construct images of themselves and others."[169] These migration narratives in the news included interpretations of the political and social actors involved in the process, such as politicians, local Czechoslovaks and Poles, and, most importantly, East Germans, whose representations changed as this migration developed. It also commented on their sheltering in Prague and Warsaw, local legal challenges they faced on their way west across several state borders, as well as local acts of hospitality and hostility they experienced. Those depictions highlighted that migrations are much more than a movement from point A to B. Hence, press representations of the migrating East German identities are understood here as storied – observed, imagined, negotiated, and, in the words of Bernhard Forchtner, "made meaningful via the narrative form".[170] Our knowledge of this migration emerges by reading text and viewing images of migrants in various environments and situations between East Germany and West Germany the selected press accounts placed them in.

Through the news reports which created East German migration narratives we see them in particular and peculiar depictions and representations. "To represent" means "to say something meaningful" by using language in its broad definition, as Stuart Hall maintained.[171] As a process, representation is concerned with the "production of the meaning of the concepts in our minds" that "stand in the place of, and at the same time, stand for" people, events, social phenomena, or practices.[172] As Jelena Tošić maintained, migrating individuals are "situated within socio-cultural transformations in multiple

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[169] Anna De Fina, "Narrative and Identities", 351-368. In: De Fina, A. and Georgakopoulou, A. (eds.) *The Handbook of Narrative Analysis*. 1st ed. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2015, 351.
[170] Bernhard Forchtner, "Introducing "Narrative in Critical Discourse Studies". *Critical Discourse Studies*, 18(3), 2021, 304-314, https://doi.org/10.1080/17405904.2020.1802765, (accessed: 14 July 2022), 305.
[171] Stuart Hall, "The Work of Representation", chapter 1. In: Hall, S., Evans, J., Nixon, S., *Representation*. 2nd ed. Los Angeles; Milton Keyes: Sage; The Open University, 2013, 1.
[172] Ibid., 2, 3.

social, cultural and political contexts", so East Germans in 1989, too, were represented by those observing and regulating their migration and its political, social, economic, and cultural environments.[173] The representations of migrants' identities related other representations of their migration origin, transit, and destination countries; the West German Embassies in Prague and Warsaw where East Germans sheltered and were directly observed by journalists and ordinary residents of Czechoslovakia and Poland; and state frontiers they crossed in order to reach Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Austria, and West Germany. The first group of representations – migration spaces – pertains to the geographical and political units that regulated this migration. The second – migration places – were a part of those spaces they existed in but enjoyed diplomatic extraterritoriality, the FRG diplomatic missions in Prague and Warsaw were the hubs of this migration where East Germans sheltered. Borders are understood as socially and politically moulded international state demarcations that were deployed to control human movement, albeit with varying effectiveness, oversight, and concern. These three groups of representations formed the East German identity depictions in the selected press accounts and wrapped them in several migration narratives which reinforced those depictions.

3. 2. Identities

Identity in migration studies is often approached via sociological lenses of alterity and "otherness" that posit migrating individuals as different from and sometimes even inferior to their destination or transit societies – as "strangers".[174] As migrations make headlines and spark heated public debates, Zygmunt Bauman argued that migrant "strangers" are interrogated, harassed, distrusted, and simply rejected because they are perceived as the "embodiments of the collapse of order" in their home countries or agents of disruption of the orderly affairs in their host spaces.[175] It is assumed that "they" are different from "us" and, as such, "they" are "other" than us. Jean-François Staszak defined "otherness" as "the result of a discursive process by which a dominant in-group ("Us," the Self) constructs one or many dominated out-groups ("Them", the Other) by stigmatising a

[173] Jelena Tošić, "Migration, Identity, and Belonging: Anthropological Perspectives on a Multidisciplinary Field of Research", 113-117. In: Messer, M., Schroeder, R., and Wodak, R. (eds.) *Migrations: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*. Wien; Heidelberg; New York; Dordrecht; London: Springer, 2012, 114.
[174] Jean-François Staszak, "Other/Otherness", 43-47. In: Kitchin, R. and Thrift, N. (eds.) *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*. Amsterdam; Oxford: Elsevier, 2009, https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-008044910-4.00980-9, (accessed: 1 April 2020), 43.
[175] Zygmunt Bauman, *Strangers at Our Door*. Malden, MA: Polity, 2016, loc. 177-186.

difference – real or imagined".[176] Yet as Bauman claimed, although "all societies produce strangers", their difference from the inhabitants in host or transit societies is not universal and should be better understood as malleable rather than static and essential.[177] Both Bauman and Staszak noted the grounds on which groups of individuals commonly exclude others may be existing or fictitious, which shows that the difference of "strangers" may be seen as natural when it is constructed.[178] Thus, the difference of migrant "strangers" operates on a scale and it is necessary to account for its plasticity in studies on migration and identities.

Due to this, a more suitable conceptualisation for the East German migrants who travelled to West Germany in 1989 via Czechoslovakia and Prague was necessary. Established legal status identifiers for migrating individuals, a "refugee" and a "migrant", as employed by the United Nations and the International Organisation for Migration were considered first due to their common juxtaposition in the press and academic literature discussing migrations. The 1951 UN Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, used by the United Nations Refugee Agency, holds that refugees cross international borders in order to seek asylum because "their situation is often so perilous and intolerable" that "it is too dangerous for them to return home".[179] Migrants, on the other hand, are defined in broader terms as individuals who "choose to move" not because their lives are under "direct threat of persecution or death" but for work, better education, family reunion, or similar reasons.[180] The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) maintains that the term "migrants" may act as an "umbrella term" for persons who "move away from his or her place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons."[181] Both the UN Refugee Agency and the IOM assist refugees as per the Convention but IOM also assists people who do not meet the Convention's criteria for protection, as Sebastien Moretti claimed.[182]

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[176] Staszak, "Other/Otherness", 43.
[177] Zygmunt Bauman, "Making and Unmaking of Strangers". *Thesis Eleven*, 43, 1995, 1-16, https://doi.org/10.1177/072551369504300102, (accessed: 16 July 2021), 1.
[178] Bauman, *Strangers at Our Door*, loc. 112-116.
[179] Adrian Edwards, "UNHCR viewpoint: 'Refugee' or 'migrant' – Which is right?". *The UN Refugee Agency*, 27 August 2015, https://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2016/7/55df0e556/unhcr-viewpoint-refugee-migrant-right.html, (accessed: 15 April 2022).
[180] Ibid.
[181] International Organization for Migration. *Glossary on migration.* Geneva International Organization for Migration, 2019. https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iml_34_glossary.pdf, (accessed: 15 March 2022), 132.
[182] Sebastien Moretti, "Between refugee protection and migration management: the quest for coordination between UNHCR and IOM in the Asia-Pacific region". *Third World Quarterly*, 42(1), 2021, 34-51, https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2020.1780910, (accessed: 14 April 2022), 38.

Nevertheless, the IOM definition of "migrants" still privileges those under the status of "refugees" as requiring special assistance and protections.

The official legal categories for migrating individuals are deeply problematic because they establish a discriminatory economic/political binary. Rebecca Hamlin maintains that those legal categories "serve as moral distinctions between those who deserve compassion and those who do not" because migrants are seen as moving due to "different and less sympathetic motivations" than refugees whose reasons for movement warrants sympathies and international safeguards.[183] According to Hamlin, a certain degree of subordination that is apparent from this binary essentialises not only the circumstances of emigration, such as personal gain or persecution, but also people's agency or lack thereof which individuals deemed migrants are thought to possess while those seen as refugees do not.[184] David Scott FitzGerald and Rawan Arar argued that such an understanding "obscures the multiplicity of motivations that drive many migrations".[185] Echoing the argument of Stephen Castles, Heine de Haas, and Mark J. Miller, FitzGerald and Arar also agreed that "motives for migrating are often manifold" as "migrants who primarily move for economic reasons may also flee political oppression".[186] In other words, economic problems people may face often have political causes, and may constitute only part of the reason for movement.[187] This thesis holds that migrating individuals should be treated with the same level of empathy and compassion regardless of their migration motivations because economic and political reasons as well as individual aspirations and structural forces for migration often intertwine with one another.[188]

Drawing insight from migration scholars calling for the de-exceptionalisation of migration and human mobility, this thesis agrees with Heath Cabot and Giorgina Ramsey who recently argued that "displacement can only appear exceptional if life-worlds are imagined as generally stable and sedentary, secured by taken-for-granted orders of nation-

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[183] Rebecca Hamlin, *Crossing: How We Label and React to People on the Move*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2021, 7, 9.
[184] Ibid., 8-9.
[185] David Scott FitzGerald and Rawan Arar, "The Sociology of Refugee Migration". *Annual Review of Sociology*, 44, (2018), 387-406, https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-soc-073117- 041204, (accessed: 10 May 2018), 392.; Stephen Castles, Heine de Haas, and Mark J. Miller, *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*. 5th ed. New York, N.Y.: Guilford Press, 2014, 26.
[186] Castles, de Haas, and Miller, *The Age of Migration*, 26.
[187] Ibid.
[188] Ċetta Mainwaring and Noelle Brigden, "Beyond the Border: Clandestine Migration Journeys". *Geopolitics*, 21(2), 2016, 243-262, http://doi.org/10.1080/14650045.2016.1165575, (accessed: 4 May 2022), 246.

states, stable economies, and just legal systems assumed to be protective and benevolent."[189] Cabot, Ramsey, and Hamlin drew inspiration from Hannah Arendt's work, and argued that legal terms for migrating people arose from "the naturalization of an emergent national order" supported by nation-states and their bureaucracies governing human mobility.[190] Similarly, Harsha Walia claimed that they "symbolize state-regulated relations of governance and difference" whereby "the systems of power that create migrants […] criminalize migration".[191] Her view echoed Zygmunt Bauman's in his belief that nation-states differentiate between acceptable and unacceptable modes of migration by vilifying migrating individuals and complicating access to aid and safety instead of dealing with "problems that governments are incapable of handling (or are not keen on trying to handle)", among which Walia noted "crises of forced dispossession, deprivation, and displacement".[192] As such, identification of migration causes alone is insufficient to draw conclusions about migrating individuals' identities since their available alleged markers are deeply flawed and stigmatising.

By adopting established legal categories in their research uncritically, researchers may reproduce the hierarchies of deservingness and reinforce "national orders" that govern migrations through bureaucracies of mobility, argued Haven Crawley and Dimitris Skleparis.[193] Similarly, Ulrike Bialas echoed the perspective of Roger Zetter when she claimed that "shedding ill-fitting categories" in academic research is essential in order to account for the complexities of our social realities and design better ways of explaining them.[194] On the one hand, argued Bialas, migrating people may be accused of "merely feigning their trauma, minority, and persecution" if they do not fulfil existing

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[189] Heath Cabot and Giorgina Ramsey, "Deexceptionalizing Displacement: An Introduction". *Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism, and Development*, 12(3), 2021, 286-299, https://doi.org/10.1353/hum.2021.0018, (accessed: 1 Feb 2022), 286, 290
[190] Hamlin, *Crossing*, 9, 13, 16
[191] Harsha Walia, *Border and Rule: Global Migration, Capitalism, and the Rise of Racist Nationalism*. Chicago, Illinois: Haymarket Books, 2021, 2; Ther, P. (tr. J. Riemer). *The Outsiders: Refugees in Europe since 1492*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019, loc. 225-226; Roger Zetter, "More Labels, Fewer Refugees: Remaking the Refugee Label in an Era of Globalization". *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 20(2), 2007, 172-192, https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fem011, (accessed: 10 March 2022), 178, 180
[192] Harsha Walia, *Border and Rule*, 3-4.; Zygmunt Bauman, *Strangers at Our Door*, loc. 328-339.
[193] Haven Crawley and Dimitris Skleparis, "Refugees, Migrants, Neither, Both: Categorical Fetishism and the Politics of Bounding in Europe's 'Migration Crisis'". *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 44(1), 2017, 48-64, https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2017.1348224, (accessed: 1 March 2022), 49.
[194] Roger Zetter, "More Labels, Fewer Refugees: Remaking the Refugee Label in an Era of Globalization". *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 20(2), 2007, 172-192, https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fem011, (accessed: 10 March 2022), 178, 180.

legal protection requirements.[195] On the other hand, the categories that enable scholars and human rights advocates to establish grounds for their protection could be made useless if the individual in question could not be categorised as persecuted due to their minority status, for instance.[196] Bialas criticised this way of thinking as "a slippery slope to a world where people in need of protection must" "be legally adept, eloquent, and well-resourced" to receive it "rather than able to point to predefined categories of need that fit their difficult-to-tell and even more difficult-to-prove stories."[197] To avoid thinking in such categories and either/or scenarios, Bialas urged researchers to take people's diversity seriously in all of its "plurality of subjective experience" as the first step of understanding them; to continue demonstrating that categories are not universal and "also open the possibility that not everything that clashes with bureaucratic truth or complicates bureaucratic identities is deceit"; and to approach the determinations of migrants and the legal identities state bureaucrats confidently attach to them via historicisation and contextualisation.[198]

East Germans who sheltered in Prague and Warsaw on their way to West Germany are defined throughout this thesis as "migrants", deliberately understood in broad terms as people who choose to move due to a variety of reasons. The prominent binary of "us" and "them" is challenged in this study due to its inherent divisions encoded in the terms – identities are fluid and plural, not binary and black-and-white. The "us" vs. "them" framework sharpens and deepens difference, thus making "strangeness" exceptional, which normalises the assumption that "others" have little, if anything, in common with "us".[199] Although contextually different, Edward Said's enduring criticism of the "us vs. them" framework bears significance to this line of thought. According to him, this dichotomous approach "press[es] the importance of the distinction" among people and "limit[s] the human encounter between different cultures, traditions, and societies".[200] Said argued that scholars tend to "polarize" their findings according to that distinction

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[195] Ulrike Bialas, "On the Discomfort of Shedding Ill-Fitting Categories". *Migrant Knowledge*, 7 March 2022, https://migrantknowledge.org/2022/03/07/on-the-discomfort-of-shedding-ill-fitting-categories/, (accessed: 9 March 2022).; Roger Zetter, "Labelling Refugees: Forming and Transforming a Bureaucratic Identity". *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 4(1), 1999, 39-62, https://academic.oup.com/jrs/article/4/1/39/1549129, (accessed 24 Feb 2022), 39.
[196] Bialas, "On the Discomfort of Shedding Ill-Fitting Categories".
[197] Ibid.
[198] Ibid.
[199] Lilie Chouliaraki, Myria Georgiou, and Rafal Zaborowski, "The European "Migration Crisis" and the Media: A Cross-European Press Content Analysis", 10.
[200] Edward Said, *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books, 1979, 46.

whereby "the Oriental becomes more Oriental, the Westerners more Western".[201] Different kinds of social relations beyond "othering" of the migrants may also emerge during a migration. For this reason, the thesis adopts another way forward to analyse East German migrant identities.

The concept of (un)familiarity, employed in studies of human geography, borders, and tourism, rather than "otherness", is employed in this thesis. According to Martin Klatt, "the dichotomy of Unfamiliarity/Familiarity describes the degree of the known in relation to the unknown in social contacts and interactions."[202] While the "us vs. them" framework offers ready-made comparison based on embedded difference, the (un)familiarity approach allows for flexibility and fluidity that comes with any representation of a migrating individual and their transit and host societies. This framework offers criticism of assumed knowledge of others and ourselves, claimed Bianca Szytniewski and Bas Spierings, and is used "to address objects, persons, places, spaces and situations", as Maria De Fátima Amante explained.[203] In this sense, someone's "strangeness" depends on the recognition that someone, someplace, a certain space, or experience is strange, and also on the assumption that it may appear as such to others around us.[204] Drawing on Dorte Jagetić Andersen's conceptualisations, Szytniewski and Spierings argued that that we should think about our own social position in relation to another person, as "the self reflects in the other and as the other."[205] As Anderson explained, (un)familiarity is "a feeling […] [that] finds articulation in the human psyche and even when it is informed by social institutions it reflects the individual's sense of self."[206] As Szytniewski and Spierings argued, "the process of "othering" is different for

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[201] Ibid.
[202] Martin Klatt, "What has Happened to Our Cross-Border Regions? Corona, Unfamiliarity and Transnational Borderlander Activism in the Danish-German Border Region". *Borders in Perspective*, 4, 2020, 43-47, https://doi.org/10.25353/ubtr-xxxx-b825-a20b, (accessed: 16 July 2021), 44.
[203] Bianca Szytniewski and Bas Spierings, "Encounters with Otherness: Implications of (Un)familiarity for Daily Life in Borderlands". *Journal of Borderlands Studies*, 29(3), 2014, 339-35, https://doi.org/10.1080/08865655.2014.938971, (accessed: 16 July 2021), 340.; Maria de Fátima Amante, "Recovering the Paradox of the Border: Identity and (Un)familiarity Across the Portuguese–Spanish Border". *European Planning Studies*, 21(1), 2013, 24-41, https://doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2012.716237, (accessed: 16 July 2021), 25.
[204] Maria de Fátima Amante, "Recovering the Paradox of the Border", 25.
[205] Bianca Szytniewski and Bas Spierings, "Encounters with Otherness", 340; Dorte Jagetić Andersen, "Exploring the Concept of (Un)familiarity: (Un)familiarity in Border Practices and Identity-Formation at the Slovenian–Croatian Border on Istria". *European Planning Studies*, 21(1), 2013, 42-57, https://doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2012.716238, (accessed: 16 July 2021), 48.
[206] Dorte Jagetić Andersen, "Do if you Dare: Reflections on (Un)familiarity, Identity-Formation and Ontological Politics". *Journal of Borderlands Studies*, 29(3), 2014, 327-337, https://doi.org/10.1080/08865655.2014.938966, (accessed: 16 July 2021), 331.

each individual" and even if powerful, it is unlikely to "other" completely.[207] If we know close to nothing about someone or have pre-defined assumptions about them, positive or negative, it is easy to disregard their experiences and narratives entirely or make sweeping generalisations about them that have little to do with them. Since we mostly know about migrating individuals from news reports, or we are familiarised with them through particular representations and stereotypes, they cannot be "the other" but only (un)familiar to us. (Un)familiarity offers an alternative path to challenge the taken-for-granted assumption that "it is possible, straightforward even" to differentiate between various groups of migrating people, such as "refugees", "migrants", "asylum seekers", "escapees", or even "tourists", based on their reasons of migration.[208]

Approached visually, those differentiations may appear even less discernible. Reported interviews and detailed descriptions of East Germans migrants in the 1989 Czech, English, and Polish language news reports were not the only way of communicating this migration.[209] Photography plays an important role in how people perceive migration because of its immediacy at catching our attention, so there is little wonder about our contemporary reliance on images and visual migration storytelling.[210] John Berger was convinced that "the reciprocal nature of vision is more fundamental than that of spoken dialogue" because that "dialogue is an attempt to verbalize […] how, either metaphorically or literally, 'you see things', and an attempt to discover how 'he sees things'".[211] However, as William J. T. Mitchell argued, visual representations are as power-laden as textual depictions. Drawing on Michel Foucault and Michel de Certeau, Mitchell maintained that "the production of political power through the use of media" pertains to the issue of representations.[212] Despite the heterogeneity of those representations, dominant ways of representing emerge because "the fault-line in representation is deeply linked with fundamental ideological divisions" regarding the perceptions of self and other.[213] By exploring and analysing news images of East Germans and their migration conditions, the thesis seeks to determine the relations

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[207] Szytniewski and Spierings, "Encounters with Otherness", 342.
[208] Crawley and Skleparis, "Refugees, Migrants, Neither, Both", 48.
[209] Due to photograph copyright regulations and SARS-CoV-2 pandemic-related access issues, photographs from the *AP* are few and *Gazeta Wyborcza'*s visual material could not be accessed at all. In some cases, such as with *Mladá Fronta* and *Życie Warszawy*, poor quality of photographs also made it difficult to analyse and present them.
[210] Tanya Sheehan, *Photography and Migration*. Abingdon, Oxon; New York: Routledge, 2018, [1].
[211] John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*. London: BBC and Penguin, 1972, 6.
[212] William J. T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994, 3.
[213] Ibid., 5.

between the visual and textual storytelling techniques of this migration in the selected news outlets.

Photographs represent social reality and its subjects as "interpreted", thus capturing only a fraction of what social processes, such as migrations, may entail. Tanya Sheehan claimed that "overcrowded boats and trains; life preservers and backpacks, with or without their human users; fences, tents, and other forms of containment or restriction; outstretched feed and hands; young children in the arms of parents or strangers; anguished, angry, vacant faces; and countless bodies arranged in lines, standing still or moving forward", depicted by photographers documenting human migration, today form "a consistent visual rhetoric" of this process.[214] Sheehan argued that "these images can fuse together in viewers' minds" and "frame migration in terms of forced displacement, trauma, victimhood, and […] empathy" even though "so much more can be pictured and said of the medium's role in the movement of peoples within and across borders."[215] For instance, photographs of children in distressing situations are extremely powerful: children are innocent and they do not deserve hardship endured during migrations.[216] Yet the very assumption that migration and migrants look a certain way already reveals the social biases that people grew accustomed to through their exposure to certain migration representations. Common representations of the needy and desperate strangers influence those viewing the photographs and images to confirm their assumptions that migrating people are indeed needy and desperate or to make them question their neediness and desperation. Photographs communicate social knowledge, so visual depictions of East German migrants may have contrasted in the English, Czech, and Polish language press which would imply the existence of different modes of perception and creation of social knowledge.[217] Photographs of or related to the 1989 East German migrants are considered here not merely as "mechanical records" or "evidence" but as a photographer's "way of seeing" that involved a "choice of subject" as it made its way through to the page of a newspaper.[218] Importantly, East Germans as subjects of a photograph in a newspaper were not seen in a vacuous blank space – they were surrounded by other people in

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[214] Sheehan, Photography and Migration, [1].
[215] Ibid.
[216] Samuel Parker, Anja Aaheim Naper and Simon Goodman, "How a Photograph of a Drowned Refugee Child Turned a Migrant Crisis into a Refugee Crisis: A Comparative Discourse Analysis". *for(e)dialogue*, 2(1), 2018, 12-28, https://pure.coventry.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/19737614/601_5697_1_PB_1_.pdf, (accessed: 3 Dec 2018), 14, 19.
[217] Robert Hariman and John Louis Lucaites, *No Caption Needed: Iconic Photographs, Public Culture, and Liberal Democracy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011, 10.
[218] John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*. London: BBC and Penguin, 1972, 7.

particular places of their migration and shelter in Prague and Warsaw. Those visual and textual representations of the FRG diplomatic missions, state borders, and countries they left, aimed to reach, and transited through also informed their identity depictions in the selected press accounts.

3. 2. 1. Spaces, places, borders

This thesis maintains that the meanings behind the representations of the East German migrants' identities were informed in the selected Czech, Polish, and English language press by the depictions of three major components of their migration narratives. First, the geographical spaces of East German initial residence, transit, and destination – both German states, Czechoslovakia, and Warsaw – were crucial for depictions of migrants themselves. Second, the socially experienced migration places of the Prague and Warsaw's West German diplomatic missions which became their shelter formed the Czechoslovak and Polish press coverage of this process. And finally, the 1989 East German travel west via Prague and Warsaw as a transnationally developing and reported migration story of various encounters is incomplete without depictions of various state borders migrants crossed in order to reach their transit and destination spaces and places of shelter.[219] Those discursive constructions shaped migrant identities and their representations and introduced nuance to those depictions beyond difference and "strangeness".[220]

As the Cold War context shaped the content of the selected news outlets, this thesis follows Martin J. Medhurst's observation that those studying its processes "are [also] studying a linguistically mediated act that cannot be separated easily from the discourses that call it into being, sustain, structure, and ultimately define it."[221] Discussions of states migrants left, transited through, and arrived at informed their migration narratives and identity depictions. For instance, an identifier "citizen" that may form someone's identity is usually followed with accompanying "clusters of terms", to borrow Robert F. Barsky's

[219] Mette Louise Berg and Elen Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, "Introduction to the Issue: Encountering Hospitality and Hostility". *Migration and Society: Advances in Research*, 1(1), 2018, 1-6, https://doi.org/10.3167/arms.2018.010102, (accessed: 20 May 2022), 1.
[220] Laura Bieger and Nicole Maruo-Schröder, "Space, Place, and Narrative": A Short Introduction". *Zeitschrift für Anglistik und Amerikanistik*, 64(1), (2016), 3-9, http://doi.org/10.1515/zaa-2016-0002, (accessed: 8 Jul 2021), 5.
[221] Martin J. Medhurst, "Introduction", xiii-xvi. In: Medhurst, M. J., et al (eds.) *Cold War Rhetoric: Strategy, Metaphor, and Ideology*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1997, xv.

expression, which determine precise meanings of the identifier at hand.[222] So, a descriptor of the political space, such as "German Democratic Republic" (GDR), denotes the legal belonging of a person as a subject of a particular political order through their citizenship, such as "the citizen of the GDR". By depicting East Germans as citizens of a particular political space, selected news representations also depicted East Germany (and, by extension its political allies and enemies) as a particularly defined space of their emigration. If "GDR" was referred to as "a socialist workers' state", then "the citizen of the GDR" may have also been perceived as a socialist worker of the GDR due to the ideologically shaped political myths that defined that state in these terms. If a socialist worker decided to abandon their socialist workers' state, that meant that there was tension between the state and the citizen of that state – something was not right. Similarly, the representations of the FRG diplomatic missions – shelters of safety and physical encounter between reporters and East Germans – acted as places where the migrants could be seen and interviewed as individuals rather than as "nationals" of a state. News reports on their dangerous border crossing practices also depicted the migrants crossing them in a particular way, usually perceived by their migration spaces of origin, transit, or destination as legal or illegal. These depictions informed migrants' identity depictions as narrative devices that constructed the stories of their migrations in the selected ideological Cold War press accounts.

Aleida Assmann's distinction between a space and a place is illuminating in this analysis of identity representations and related narrative constructions. In her examination of the role of memory and commemoration practices in moulding historical narratives surrounding the Palestinian sites of memory in Israel, Assmann discussed the power dynamics and politics involved in memory construction. Assmann claimed that "those who speak of a country as 'space' consider it as malleable and changeable, [while] those who consider it as 'place' tend to take the lived environment as a given reality".[223] In the context of the 1989 East German migration, migration spaces defined as "Poland" or "Czechoslovakia", "GDR" and "FRG" are considered here as meaning different things to different people which does not necessarily involve their own lived experience. Their meanings are often affixed by national myths, often based on selective interpretations of

[222] Robert F. Barsky, Immigrants in an Era of Arbitrary Law: the Flight and Plight of People Deemed 'Illegal'. Abingdon, Oxon; New York, New York: Routledge, 2016, 39.
[223] Aleida Assmann, "One Land and Three Narratives: Palestinian Sites of Memory in Israel". *Memory Studies*, 11(2), 2018, 287-300, https://doi.org/10.1177/1750698018771859, (accessed: 7 March 2020), 289.

the past which may be employed to unite residents of a political space in support or hostility towards those perceived as its enemies. For instance, Vladimír Macura argued that myth-making practices made Czechoslovakia into a specifically defined entity through the ongoing process of "mystification".[224] Macura defined it as "an inner need to construct some system that coheres" and whose identity one can "put on".[225] Accordingly, a mystification united Czechoslovaks and Poles in a similar manner – against a historical enemy in the form of "the Germans", enduringly associated with historical violence, oppression, and subjugation. This type of nationalist historical discourse, embraced by the Czechoslovak and Polish communist parties to various degrees throughout the Cold War, presented the respective populations as historical victims of different iterations of the German authorities and population. Defined by these mythologies, the political spaces of Czechoslovakia and Poland could be understood as "landscapes of control and nationalist performance", following Anssi Paasi's reflection on similar constructions of national narratives and identities.[226] Representations of the East German migration spaces in the press formed specific narratives within which the migrants' identities and their migration were to be perceived. Historical victim-enemy narratives may have been used to distance local populations of Czechoslovakia and Poland from supporting the (East) German emigration cause.[227]

Depictions of states and political entities as martyrs or villains also imply corresponding representations of their societies. Laura Bieger and Nicole Maruo-Schröder, inspired by the work of Henri Lefebvre, claimed that narratives "create imaginary maps and itineraries of and for the social relations that constitute space and place" as they redefine, challenge, and change "the very frames in which the spaces and places stemming from this production are used and lived.[228] According to Małgorzata Głowacka-Grajper, a "martyrological narrative" that highlights the ways a political space was historically wronged is common in Poland, but it also extends to much of the

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[224] Caryl Emerson, "Semio-Feuilletons on the End of Empires. The Cult of the Center and the Comedy of the Bridge", ix-xv. In: Macura, V. (tr. Hana Píchová, Craig Stephen Cravens), *The Mystifications of a Nation: "the Potato Bug" and Other Essays on Czech Culture*. Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2010, xii.
[225] Ibid.
[226] Anssi Paasi, "Bounded Spaces in a 'Borderless World'? Border Studies, Power and the Anatomy of Territory". *Journal of Power*, 2(2), 2009, 213-234, https://doi.org/10.1080/17540290903064275, (accessed: 2 April 2019), 223.
[227] Aleida Assmann, "Transnational Memories". *European Review*; 22(4), 2014, 546-556, https://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S1062798714000337, (accessed: 23 April 2021), 552.; Lea David, *The Past Can't Heal Us: the Dangers of Mandating Memory in the Name of Human Rights*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020, 187.
[228] Ibid.

European continent, collectively perceived "as an area of disasters, suffering, and trauma".[229] However, as Brian Porter-Szücs succinctly put it, these nationalist stories greatly obscure the fact that Poland is nothing more than "a group of people who have had to make sense of a changing world".[230] The "mystification" of political spaces of "Germany", "Czechoslovakia", or "Poland" erases the diversity of its inhabitants' experiences and simplifies their representations as static and simple imaginaries. According to Julia Sonnevend who echoed Reinhart Koselleck in her examination of the stories that made the Berlin Wall into a potent symbol of the Cold War memory, "[e]very historical portrayal represents a selection from the potentially limitless field of things endured or enacted in the past."[231] Thus, "the Germans" were not necessarily perceived by all Poles and Czechoslovaks as "the enemy", nor were they themselves seen by all as historical victims. As such, alternative events, processes, and experiences were also present in the past, and untangling nationalist narratives which were aimed to control depictions of nation-states could demonstrate that.

In order to deconstruct such nationalist "mystifications", textual and visual depictions of political spaces of the East German migration are interpreted here as "media templates", a term coined by Jenny Kitzinger. Kitzinger defined it as providing "context for unfolding events" which may be noted by its "lack of innovation", "status as received wisdom", and "closure" which "reify a kind of historical determinism which can filter out dissenting accounts, camouflage conflicting facts and promote one type of narrative."[232] "Media templates" may be used as a shorthand in comparative journalistic reporting to elicit specific responses and interpretations of a present event, depicted as similar to the past one.[233] Phrases such as "another Hitler" or "a Third World War" used to discuss people or events imply a comparison and portray a current issue in specific terms by employing a selective vision of the past as a "template" to guide reactions and responses to news discussing the latest crisis or a shocking political development. However, despite never truly materialising, these allegories remain strong narrative building blocks. As

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[229] Małgorzata Głowacka-Grajper, "Memory in Post-communist Europe: Controversies over Identity, Conflicts, and Nostalgia". *East European Politics and Societies and Cultures*, 32(4), 2018, 924 –935, https://doi.org/10.1177/0888325418757891, (accessed: 27 March 2020), 928.
[230] Brian Porter-Szücs, *Poland in the Modern World: Beyond Martyrdom*. Hoboke, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, 2014, 4.
[231] Julia Sonnevend, Stories without Borders: The Berlin Wall and the Making of a Global Iconic Event. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018, 35.
[232] Jenny Kitzinger, "Media Templates: Patterns of Association and the (Re)construction of Meaning Over Time". *Media Culture and Society*, 22(1), 2000, 61-84, https://doi.org/10.1177/016344300022001004, (accessed: 30 September 2018), 76.
[233] Ibid., 75

follows, they contribute to the constructions of negative forms of familiarity towards others as "enemies" because they thrive on naturalised stereotypes and selective narratives that support them.

Representations of migration places as subjectively lived and experienced environments may help understand that. Yi-Fu Tuan maintained that political spaces are made meaningful through people's embodiment of and attachment to a specific place in space.[234] Additionally, Courtney J. Campbell channelled the work of Henri Lefebvre in her explanation that people's "patterns, behaviour and communications" naturalise a place in space.[235] In the case of the East German migration via Prague and Warsaw, the West German diplomatic missions are conceptualised in this thesis as migration places of shelter, sanctuary, and encounters where migrants lived their lives and were cared for while they waited for diplomats to decide on their emigration. In this sense, the representations of the FRG Embassies as migration places of lived experience in the selected press accounts mattered to the East German migrant identity representations because they also informed their experiences of this migration place and their migration spaces. In the selected reports, they were the focus of journalistic attention.

In addition to migration spaces and places, borders and border regimes are common features in international migration processes. According to Markus Rheindorf and Ruth Wodak, contemporary discussions about borders and bordering reflect on the relations of power and state interests, often built on ideas about state security and threats to it – and border crossers are commonly defined according to the latter terms.[236] Although policy-makers tend to present borders as fixed and immutable in order to depict their power in a political space as such, Timothy Phillips sees them differently. In his recent book on "the Iron Curtain", Phillips defined them "as solid as cast iron but as brittle as rust."[237] Phillips maintains that borders "are also the work of transient men and women, and as such are transient themselves."[238] Migrations challenge border controls and systems of state

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[234] Phil Hubbard and Rob Kitchin, "Why Key Thinkers?", 1-17, in: Phil Hubbard and Rob Kitchin (eds.) *Key Thinkers on Space and Place*. Los Angeles: Sage, 2011, 6.
[235] Courtney J. Campbell, "Space, Place and Scale: Human Geography and Spatial History in *Past and Present*". *Past and Present,* 239, 2018, e23-e45, http://doi.org/10.1093/pastj/gtw006, (accessed: 3 June 2021), e23.
[236] Markus Rheindorf and Ruth Wodak, "Sociolinguistic Perspectives on Migration Control: An Introduction", 1-9. In: Rheindorf, M. and Wodak, R., *Sociolinguistic Perspectives on Migration Control: Language Policy, Identity and Belonging*. Bristol; Blue Ridge Summit: Multilingual Matters, 2020, 3.
[237] Timothy Phillips, The Iron Curtain and the Wall: a Modern Journey along Europe's Cold War Border. London: Granta, 2022.
[238] Ibid.

protection by drawing attention to the lives of people those processes affect. For instance, stories of lives lost at the Berlin Wall provide this symbol of the Cold War with additional meanings beyond a mere physical construction or a symbol of ideological and political division. "The Wall", as well as other boundaries and borders, becomes "extremely rich in significations", in the words of Étienne Balibar.[239] Most importantly, according to Balibar, borders no longer mark the political space of a nation-state on a map, geographically, but they are "dispersed a little everywhere, wherever the movement of information, people, and things is happening and is controlled".[240] So, being "a crucial asset in individual and nation-based identity formation", as argued Marc Silberman, Karen E. Till, and Janet Ward, depictions of borders, such as the ones East Germans crossed, imposed specific meanings on the identities of those who crossed them.[241]

As such, Dorte Jagetić Andersen and other scholars who use the framework of "(un)familiarity" in their studies argued that "borders are made by us, they are used to narrate identities, be they individual or social, they are performed in the way we live and they constitute in the regulatory practices we impose upon ourselves – and thereby upon others" "because of what we believe we are (and are not)."[242] Therefore, borders are also themselves "a belief, an imagination that creates and shapes a world, a social reality", as Henk van Houtum, Olivier Kramsch, and Wolfgang Zierhofe maintained.[243] In the case of the East German migration, beliefs regarding crossing borders and meeting others there, be it other migrants, locals, or border guards, were visible in the selected Czech, Polish, and English language accounts. Together with textual and visual depictions of migrant identities, migration spaces and places, representations of borders East Germans crossed in order to reach their destination informed other representations as well as their

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[239] Étienne Balibar (tr. James Swenson), *We, the People of Europe? Reflections on Transnational Citizenship*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004, 1.
[240] Ibid.
[241] Marc Silberman, Karen E. Till, and Janet Ward, "Introduction", 1-18. In: Silberman, M., Till, K. E., and Ward, J. (eds.) *Walls, Borders, Boundaries: Spatial and Cultural Practices in Europe*. New York; Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2012, 2.
[242] Dorte Jagetić Andersen, "Do if you Dare: Reflections on (Un)familiarity, Identity-Formation and Ontological Politics". *Journal of Borderlands Studies*, 29(3), 2014, 327-337, http://doi.org/10.1080/08865655.2014.938966, (accessed: 16 July 2021), 334.
[243] Bas Spierings and Martin van der Velde, "Shopping, Borders and Unfamiliarity: Consumer Mobility in Europe". *Journal of Economic and Human Geography*, 99(4), 2008, 497-505, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9663.2008.00484.x, (accessed: 30 July 2021); Alexander Izotov and Jussi Laine, "Constructing (Un)familiarity: Role of Tourism in Identity and Region Building at the Finnish–Russian Border". *European Planning Studies*, 21(1), 2013, 93-111, https://doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2012.716241, (16 July 2021), 98.

migration narratives. The following part of this chapter discusses what ideas and systems of thought defined the press that weaved them.

3. 3. Cold War rhetoric

This thesis asserts that English, Czech, and Polish language news reported favoured interpretations of the 1989 East German migration as self-evident and objective facts. Any of their textual or visual representations of state borders, political spaces, and lived East German places in Prague and Warsaw were defined in different conceptual ways. Discussing the reporting practices of the time, Dina Fainberg had recently argued that "during much of the Cold War, both sides sought to mobilize [media] audiences at home and abroad in support of their ideas", both claiming "truth" was their moral foundation.[244] The so-called "East" and "West" "lambasted the rival's ideas as lies, disinformation, and propaganda" but mirrored each other's actions while sending opposing messages about themselves to their populations and international observers.[245] Each established their own preferred interpretations of the Cold War system which shows how power functions through language in both weakening and strengthening preferred depictions of its processes and events. Filtered through the media, those worldviews reached audiences close and far away and influenced their perspectives on any given topic.[246]

As Martin J. Medhurst's reflection on Kenneth Burke's explorations of highly ideological Cold War rhetoric shows, "no sooner has one stepped into the house of language than one becomes imprisoned, for while a given terminology is a way of seeing the world it is also, […] a way of not seeing as well".[247] Understood as a power-laden mechanism used for the dissemination of preferred interpretations, evaluations, and meanings of events, processes, and people's experiences of their social reality, language was employed to construct the Cold War press into a field of confrontation and self-assertion.[248] According to Martin Reisigl and Ruth Wodak language is an ideational system that creates, mediates, and constitutes a "worldview and a system composed of

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[244] Dina Fainberg, Cold War Correspondents: Soviet and American Reporters on the Ideological Frontlines. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2021, 14.
[245] Ibid.
[246] Patrick Major and Rana Mitter, "East is East and West is West? Towards a comparative socio-cultural history of the Cold War". *Cold War History*, 4(1), 2003, 1-22, https://doi.org/10.1080/14682740312331391714, (accessed: 24 April 2021), 8.
[247] Martin J. Medhurtst, "Introduction", xiii-xvi, in: Medhurst, M. J., et al (eds.) *Cold War Rhetoric: Strategy, Metaphor, and Ideology*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1997, xv.
[248] Birgit Neumann and Martin Zierold, "Media as Ways of Worldmaking: Media-specific Structures and Intermedial Dynamics", 103-118. In: Nünning, V., et al. (ed), *Cultural Ways of Worldmaking: Media and Narratives.* Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010, 103.

related mental representations, convictions, opinions, attitudes, values and evaluations", or a discourse.[249] More broadly, this worldview, or discourse, is defined by Susan G. Strauss as "the social and cognitive process of putting the world into words" and is useful in analysing the news reports on the 1989 East German migration in the Cold War English, Czech, and Polish language press.[250] In his analyses of the Polish communist language, Michał Głowiński considered the press as "primarily a document of a certain state of mind" of its creators, and an example of their "world-making", which implies agency on the part of those responsible for naming, labelling, and portraying people, events and process in it.[251] Therefore, our knowledge about the East German migration west in 1989 via Czechoslovakia and Poland, in this case, is not unbiased – the words and conceptualisations we use to talk about it are not neutral in their values but rather express a particular viewpoint.

Linguistic constructions are at the core of our interpretations of the world and ideologies that guide our social relations. In terms of constructing a specific, state-socialist visions of themselves and others in Czechoslovakia and Poland, Timothy Garton Ash argued that Marxist-Leninist ideology was necessary for the "semantic occupation of the public sphere".[252] He argued that it was "as offensive to them [anti-regime protestors in Czechoslovakia] as military occupation".[253] However, in Poland, it was not as strong as in other Soviet allies, mainly due to the activities of the Catholic Church and independent intellectuals.[254] As Teun van Dijk explained, during the Cold War, mainly due to western perception that political ideologies were used by the communist parties in Europe to indoctrinate populations and restructure their worldviews according to Marxist-Leninism, the term "ideology" was understood negatively as "a system of wrong, false, distorted or otherwise misguided beliefs", synonymous with lies and propaganda expressed through language.[255] Yet van Dijk contended that this view only contributed to

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[249] Martin Reisigl and Ruth Wodak, "The Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA)", chapter. 2. In: Wodak R. and Meyer, M. (eds.) *Methods for Critical Discourse Analysis*. Los Angeles: Sage, 2016, 24.
[250] Susan G. Strauss, *Discourse Analysis: Putting Our World Into Words*. New York; Oxon: Routledge. 2013, 2.
[251] Michał Głowiński, *Nowomowa i Ciągi Dalsze: Szkice Dawne i Nowe*. Kraków*:* Kraków TAiWPN Universitas, 2009, 136.
[252] Timothy Garton Ash, *The Magic Lantern: the Revolution of '89*, London: Atlantic Books, 2019 [1990], 110.
[253] Ibid, 111.
[254] Timothy Garton Ash, *The Polish Revolution: Solidarity*, 3rd ed., Yale University Press: New Haven, 2002 [1983], 292.
[255] Teun Van Dijk, *Ideology: a Multidisciplinary Approach*. London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 1998, 2.; Anselma Gallinat, *Narratives in the Making: Writing the East German Past in the Democratic Present*. New York; Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2021, 8; Garton Ash, *The Magic Lantern*, 120.

the reductionist enforcement of the binary oppositions that guided interpretations of the Soviet political sphere and masked the western use of language to influence and promote other worldviews often based on diametrically opposed ideas during the Cold War conflict. This interpretation of ideologies, especially related to Marxist-Leninism, cleverly omitted the fact that all social entities adopt an ideology, understood in broad terms as a system of ideas and beliefs about a certain topic, thus creating a particular discourse, or worldview, about it. Wary of the fact that "the intensity with which the state apparatus develops, protects, and enforces" an ideology is "much lower [in liberal democratic regimes] than in the totalitarian or authoritarian regimes", as Marek Skovajsa warned, this thesis maintains that language use is never transparent and is always ideological as it allows us to express our vision of the world around us in distinct ways.[256] Through linguistic constructions and ordinary everyday phrases, ideology was and is used to advocate for both equality and privilege for the few or the many, and it is also employed to unite and divide societies on the basis of race, language, ethnicity, religion, or political views.

One of the most revealing publications related to the use of language in order to influence and transform social relations during the twentieth century is Viktor Klemperer's *Lingua Tertii Imperii*.[257] Klemperer was a contemporary of the National Socialist Party dictatorship in Germany who documented changes in the everyday German language in his diary. His observations led his argument that language was the "most powerful, most public and most surreptitious means of advertising" Nazism.[258] It was transmitted to wider society gradually over time and took its effect as "words can be like tiny doses of arsenic: they are swallowed unnoticed, appear to have no effect, and then after a little time the toxic reaction sets in after all".[259] Their repetition rendered them a part of European social order that appealed to populations. To an extent, this view could be applied to the socialist and capitalist use of language, as both economic, social, and political orders they represented wielded language to construct dominant ways of defining

[256] Marek Skovajsa, "Absent Past: the Language of Czech Sociology before and after 1989", chapter 1. In: Andrews, Ernest (ed.) *Legacies of Totalitarian Language in the Discourse Culture of the Post-Totalitarian Era*. Lanham; Boulder; New York; Toronto; Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2011, 16.
[257] Viktor Klemperer (tr. Martin Brady), The Language of the Third Reich: LTI, Lingua Tertii Imperii. A Philologist's Notebook. London: Continuum, 2006.
[258] Ibid., 15.
[259] Ibid., 16.

themselves and others, to provide particular way of interpreting the world, and to "advertise" specific ways of thinking of various social problems.

On the Czechoslovak side, one of the foundational scholarly research projects on the Czechoslovak Communist Party (KSČ) language of the late 1970s and 1980s has been conducted by Karel Palek (pen name Petr Fidelius). Fidelius found that communist thinking, expressed in its official press, was primarily intended to "bind the minds" of the Party members together to ensure their loyalty to the worldview and the system it created.[260] As such, the official rhetoric of the Party primarily reached inwards before it was communicated to ordinary residents of Czechoslovakia through new laws, films, news, and economic agreements. Fidelius claimed that socialist discourse established "a certain way of seeing the world" rather than coercing people into "seeing" it correctly.[261] It was categorised by a "reduced […] plurality of images of the world, as it has evolved in modern times in Western culture, to a single image" that represented it via the simplified binary of the good socialist and bad capitalist world.[262] As such, Fidelius argued that the Party's rhetoric was not an "amorphous pile of 'lies'" but "an instrument of power", "embedded […] into all aspects of human life: politics, popular culture, professional life, leisure and even sports", and wielded by the KSČ to establish a coherent worldview amongst its members and those in whose name they claimed legitimacy to govern – the peasants, the workers, and the people. [263] The KSČ rhetoric fluctuated in intensity throughout the 1980s but Jan Mervart noted that Mikhail Gorbachev's reforms of *perestroika* and *glasnost* "brought no substantive changes in official cultural policy" which governed the artistic and informational spheres in Czechoslovakia.[264] For this reason, and to free themselves from the Party's "newspeak", activists against the state-socialist regime in Czechoslovakia in 1989, for instance, paid specific attention to the wording of their proclamations and proposals, according to Garton Ash.[265] In their attempts to reclaim their language, filled with "the old mendacious phrases" with which the Czechoslovak Communist Party (and the Polish one as well) narrated the state-

[260] Petr Fidelius, *Řeč komunistické moci*. Praha: Triáda, 2016 [1983], 11.
[261] Ibid.
[262] Fidelius, loc. 200-213 (e-book).
[263] Fidelius, 13.
[264] Jan Mervart, "Shaping 'Real Socialism'", 195-214. In: McDermott, K. and Stibbe, M. (eds.) *Czechoslovakia and Eastern Europe in the Era of Normalisation, 1969–1989*. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022, 207.
[265] Timothy Garton Ash, The Magic Lantern: the Revolution of '89, 90.

socialist world, dissidents and activists tried to find "new, plain" words to describe their ideas on how a non-communist Czechoslovakia might look like.

The idea that the sovietisation of Czechoslovakia or Poland had forced its leaders to adopt similar linguistic practices towards its population in spreading and supporting its ideology was challenged by scholars studying communist rhetoric. Inspired by Fidelius, Vladimír Macura also maintained that the Czechoslovak "newspeak" was not a "propaganda language" understood as a "foreign [Soviet, not Czechoslovak] and unacceptable code – a code that simply they speak" but rather a tool for constructing the "socialist world" which "can no longer be understood as something comfortingly external" because "it is ours, we were its co-creators".[266] Macura employed Karl Mannheim's interpretation of ideology as a "stabilising social thinking" in these reflections.[267] This definition, as well as Macura's thinking, also relates to Michal Pullmann's work. He argued that the so-called post-1968 process of "normalisation" (*normalizace*) in Czechoslovakia, or the re-establishment of conservative forms of socialist ideology in the state, cannot be effectively understood "without a thorough analysis of the communist language".[268] Pullmann maintained that even though "this discourse was scarcely believed in its literal meaning", "it did become the hegemonic narrative justifying selective needs, values and ideological stances" of those who embraced, resisted, or came to passively use this "authoritative discourse".[269] As Alexei Yurchak argued regarding the wider use of ideological language in the Soviet Union, "control, coercion, alienation, fear, and moral quandaries" mixed with "ideals, communal ethics, dignity, creativity, and care for the future" in the minds of Soviet citizens.[270] The language espousing those values was used to maintain social order, as well as continue developing and improving the state-socialist system.[271] However, as meanings for concepts such as peace, state, prosperity, and the very "normal" of the "normalisation" were never static, so the "authoritative discourse" of the Czechoslovak communists was

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[266] Vladimír Macura, *Šťastný věk: symboly, emblémy a mýty 1949-1989*. Praha: Pražská imaginace, 1992, 13.
[267] From Karl Mannheim's "Ideology and Utopia", (1991), 91, in: Macura, *Šťastný věk,* 14.
[268] Michal Pullmann, Konec experimentu: přestavba a pád komunismu v Československu. Praha: Scriptorium, 2011, 19.
[269] Pullmann, *Konec experimentu,* 19: ideology as "authoritative discourse", not "false consciousness"; Michal Pullmann, "The Ideological Face of Normalisations: Socialist Modernity and the "Quiet Life"", 53-73. In: McDermott, K. and Stibbe, M. (eds.) *Czechoslovakia and Eastern Europe in the Era of Normalisation, 1969-1989*. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022, 54.
[270] Alexei Yurchak, Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More: The Last Soviet Generation. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006, 10.
[271] Michal Pullmann, "The Ideological Face of Normalisations", 64.

"always vulnerable", argued Pullmann.[272] This thesis considers the communist language practices in representing the 1989 East German migrants and their migration in their daily news as an example of a use of specifically conceptualised social thinking model that defined and justified preferred representations of migrants by establishing particular meanings of their identity definitions with the support of grand narratives about their migration.

On the Polish side, Michał Głowiński also praised Petr Fidelius (and inspired Macura) in his studies on the language of the Polish United Workers' Party (Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza, PZPR) in the press. Głowiński argued that "without storytelling any form of social life becomes impossible", and the storytelling practices of the Polish communists had to be investigated for creating a particular social life within which the Polish state-socialist realities and identities made sense.[273] As he claimed, although "ideological discourse disintegrated in Poland as early as the 1970s […] while in Czechoslovakia it returned to canonical status after the turmoil of the Prague Spring", its ideological use left scars.[274] Writing in June 1989, after the initial round of the first Polish semi-democratic elections, Głowiński noted that despite its deterioration, the Polish communist "nowomowa" ("newspeak") remained the "language of power and the language of ideology".[275] He compared the language employed by the trade union "Solidarność" in their press to their governmental coalition partners' during the 1989 elections, and concluded that it continued to employ the previously used ideological constructions of the PZPR's election pamphlets. He argued that although the "vocabulary and scale of values here are different" and "at least superficially" appear as "diametrically opposed", "the rules for constructing the discourse are the same as those of communist propaganda".[276] As such, Głowiński concluded that the new social communication in Poland was more transparent and trustworthy but the legacy of "the totalitarian form" was visible in "almost all social communication in Poland" at the start of country's democratic transition.[277] Therefore, changes of the political system in Poland did not necessarily herald immediate transformation of its media practices and language.

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[272] Ibid., 66.
[273] Michał Głowiński, *Totalitarian Speech.* Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Edition, 2014, 91.
[274] Ibid., 7.
[275] Głowiński, *Nowomowa i ciągi dalsze: szkice dawne i nowe.* 143.
[276] Głowiński, *Totalitarian Speech*, 100.
[277] Michał Głowiński, "Nowa Epoka – Stary Język". *Tygodnik Powszechny*, Nr. 48, 26 November 1989, 7.

3. 3. 1. Selected news sources and analysis

The selected press sample consists of the Czech *Lidová Demokracie* (tr. *People's Democracy*, LD), *Svobodné Slovo* (tr. *Free Word, Slovo*), and *Mladá Fronta* (tr. *Young Front*, MF)*;* the Polish *Trybuna Ludu* (tr. *People's Tribune*, TL), *Gazeta Wyborcza* (tr. *Voter's Daily*, GW), *Tygodnik Powszechny* (tr. *Universal Weekly*, TP)*, Życie Warszawy* (tr. *Warsaw Life*, ŻW)*;* and the English language *Associated Press* (AP) agency reports.[278] The interpretation of the selected newspaper content regarding the 1989 East German migration west began with a premise that they offered alternating perspectives on the East German migration via Prague and Warsaw in 1989 despite broadly shared ideological ground. For this reason, the background of their ideological leanings was especially important to grasp. For instance, the Czech-language *Mladá Fronta* (tr. *Young Front*, *MF*) was the official newspaper of the Czechoslovak Socialist Youth Union, an organisation for 15-35-year-olds, at that time. It functioned as a youth equivalent of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and its members officially adhered to Marxist-Leninism. This newspaper represents the youth officials' voice in the discussions on the East German migration as well as demonstrates its members' attempts to rethink their ideological attachment to the KSČ during the reporting on the East German migration west via Prague. The remaining two publications came from puppet political parties which functioned under the umbrella of the Czechoslovak National Front. Maintained for pluralist decorum, the existence of the Front feigned freedom of speech in an authoritarian state-socialist system based on Marxist-Leninism. Controlled by the KSČ, the Front included the Czechoslovak People's Party (Československá strana lidová, ČSL) and the Czechoslovak Socialist Party (Československá strana socialistická, ČSS). The ČSL adhered to Christian socialism and published a newspaper *Lidová Demokracie* (tr. *People's Democracy*; *LD*). According to Martina Řehořová, *LD* followed the KSČ's stance in discussions about political matters regarding national defence or internal

[278] For Czech language translations of newspaper titles, see: Bernard Wheaton and Zdeněk Kavan. *The Velvet Revolution: Czechoslovakia, 1988-1991*. Routledge, New York, 2018, 237. For Polish language translations of newspaper titles: Anonymous, "Poland". *Britannica*, https://www.britannica.com/place/Poland/Theatre-and-motion-pictures, (accessed: 26 October 2023). Newspaper locations: *Trybuna Ludu* at the University of Glasgow Research Annexe, spring of 2019; *Lidová Demokracie* and *Svobodné slovo* at the National Library of the Czech Republic in Prague in the summer of 2019; *Gazeta Wyborcza* and *Tygodnik Powszechny* at the UCL SSEES Library and *Mladá Fronta* and *Życie Warszawy* at the British Library in London in the winter of 2019. *Associated Press* and *Gazeta Wyborcza* at their own respective digital archival repositories.

functioning of the government.[279] However, when it came to politically-marginal subjects, its readers might have found ČSL opinions there which were not as dogmatic and could have even been considered subversive of the state's ideological line.[280] Presenting another alternative voice to the KSČ political monopoly in Czechoslovakia, the ČSS followed democratic socialism, a less radical form of socialist ideology than the KSČ, and published *Svobodné Slovo* (tr. *Free Word*; *Slovo*). Its former journalist Ladislav Vencálek claimed that "the Communist Party kept its distance" from the ČSS, "which it used to document that we have more parties in the National Front and also, after the signing of the Helsinki Agreement in 1975, that it respects human rights".[281] Vencálek claimed that the views of the members of both parties clashed with those of the KSČ.[282] It is expected that their representations of the East German migrants and the narratives they formed around their migration challenged those of the ruling Communist Party and offered more pluralism in the Czechoslovak discourse on this migration.[283]

The ideological leanings of the selected Polish newspapers were more diverse than those of Czechoslovakia. The newly legalised "Solidarność" newspaper *Gazeta Wyborcza* was chosen because "Solidarność" views presented a positive force of pluralism in Poland in 1989 and another part of the Polish government's position regarding this topic. The PZPR, although largely delegitimised by 1989, clung onto Polish political life despite its version of "reform" socialism, following *perestroika* and *glasnost* reforms. *Trybuna Ludu* was "one of the most opinion-forming dailies" in the country, together with a local Warsaw newspaper *Życie Warszawy*.[284] This local newspaper also gradually supported a reformist socialist ideological approach to domestic and

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[279] Martina Řehořová, "Lidová Demokracie 1986–1992: Transformace deníku politické strany v období zásadních politických změn". *Rozvoj České společnosti v EU: Výzvy a rizika. Mediální řada MED – 014.* 2008, https://web.archive.org/web/20170226132339/http://publication.fsv.cuni.cz/attachments/383_014%20-%20Rehorova.pdf, (accessed: 24 September, 2019), 8.
[280] Ibid.
[281] Jana Soukupová, "Někdo napsal, jak to doopravdy je, divili se čtenáři v únoru 1989". *iDNES.cz*, 9 March 2019. https://www.idnes.cz/brno/zpravy/novinar-ladislav-vencalek-kriticky-clanek-brno-svobodne-slovo-30-let-svobody.A190302_461172_brno-zpravy_krut, (accessed: 19 November 2019)
[282] Ibid.
[283] The argument challenges simplified points of departure some analyses of the KSČ's "total control" of information begin with, i. e., in Jirák, K. and Köpplová, B. "The Reality Show Called Democratization: Transformation of the Czech media After 1989". *Global Media Journal—Polish Edition*, 1(4), 2008, 7-23, http://www.globalmediajournal.collegium.edu.pl/artykuly/wiosna%202008/jirak-kopplova-czech-media.pdf, (accessed: 10 November 2021), 9.
[284] Jerzy S. Majewski, "*Życie Warszawy* znika z kiosków. 67 lat pisali o stolicy". *Wyborcza.pl*, 19 December, 2011, https://warszawa.wyborcza.pl/warszawa/1,54420,10838959,Zycie_Warszawy_znika_z_kioskow__67_lat_pisali_o_stolicy.html?disableRedirects=true, (accessed: 17 February 2020).

international affairs, which positioned it as similar to the PZPR's *TL*, but it provided more day-to-day reports on the migration situation in the capital. And finally, the Roman Catholic and intellectual weekly *Tygodnik Powszechny* generally represented the ideological opposition to the ruling PZPR as it based its reports on aspects of liberalism, such as openness and pluralism of opinions.[285] Primarily due to the influence of the Catholic Church in Poland, the weekly was published throughout the communist era in Poland even if it offered the most subversive views from the official PZPR's ideological stance in this collection of sources.[286] *TP's* views here are not approached as directly concordant with those of the Polish Catholic Church but rather interpreted as another non-conformist (critical of the ruling communist party) news outlet in Poland before *Gazeta* was permitted to circulate in May 1989. These Polish newspapers, together with Czechoslovak and English news, form the basis of the comparative analytical enquiry into the representations of the East German migrants' identities as well as their migration places, spaces and boundaries in this thesis.

The close-reading technique was adopted in this research for the analysis of this selection of ideologically saturated collection of primary sources. News articles were investigated both in their original language and author's translations to English. In order to "code" the findings thematically and find necessary information faster. Clariza Ruiz De Castilla defines close reading as "close textual analysis", an investigation of "the relationship between the internal workings" of a text (or visual) that seeks to clarify the meanings of a given word, phrase, or text in general, and understand what makes its contents persuasive or rhetorically effective.[287] This technique helped to understand the selected primary sources as they were – artefacts that expressed storied ideas and values of a particular time and political space which offered a glimpse into the ideological "mind-worlds" of their creators. For the analysis of photographs, a similar approach was used. Available visual sources were studied in relation to their positioning in a newspaper. Then, photographs of individuals (facial expressions, appearance, captured behaviour) were analysed in connection to the environment they were depicted in; a photograph was compared to its caption and news report, if any available, to pin down any relation

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[285] Jacek Pieśniewski, "[- - - -] W Kwadratowej klamrze. ingerencje cenzorskie w "Tygodniku Powszechnym" 1981-1987". *Więź*, 665, 2016, 91-100, https://www.ceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=440556, (accessed: 30 Jul 2020), 92.
[286] Ibid.
[287] Clariza Ruiz De Castilla, "Close Reading", 137-139, in: Allen, M. (ed.) *The SAGE Encyclopaedia of Communication Research Methods*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2018, https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781483381411, (accessed 23 Nov 2020), 137.

between them. A photograph is not perceived here as a document of the East German migration but as an example of a particular way of seeing and presenting it. It did not only depict the presence of someone or something but it also implied absences of other points of vision and depictions of this migration and its participants.

For organisational clarity of findings and their interpretation, I manually "coded" the news reports according to the themes or sub-themes that were discussed there. For instance, I coded news reports which relayed official political announcements as relating to "politics" and "diplomacy", which then were specified as relating to Czechoslovakia, Poland, GDR, or FRG. Codes for places – "FRG Embassy Warsaw" or "FRG Embassy Prague" – were employed to organise any information about the situation at the West German diplomatic missions in Poland and Czechoslovakia. "Borders" marked information pertaining to the migration developments at the respective state borders East Germans crossed on their way to Prague and Warsaw, as well as West Germany. The code "history" was attached to any reports which invoked the past in support or rejection of arguments present in a news report. "Help" grouped reports that discussed hospitality practices towards the migrants, both organised and clandestine, as well as later included reports of broader encounters between locals and migrants which were often marked by supportive and solidarising rhetoric. "Definitions" appeared in every news report because reporters constantly defined migrants. The interpretation of findings was guided by their immediate contextualisation within a selected news report which was connected to the newspapers' ideological leanings (as well as those of the political entity it represented) and dominant socio-political discourses of this migration within the migration space where the newspaper originated.

Comparison is employed in this thesis as a tool that puts the Czech, Polish, and English language practices of social and cultural meaning-making procedures and representations of migrant identities, migration spaces, places, and borders they construct in a dialogue with each other. This thesis compared and contrasted the stories and portrayals of migrants and migration in the selected press to show the transnational links in shared and contested depictions of mobility and travel. Those links were then explored across different but comparable political, cultural, informational, and historical settings of their production. This thesis followed Irene Bloemraad's argument that comparison "reminds us that social phenomena are not fixed or 'natural'" but may be perceived in a

variety and plurality of ways.[288] Comparison helped reveal how the social and political contexts shaped the representations of East German migrants and what cultural norms, media practices, and political ideologies formed respective Czech, Polish, and English language migration press coverage. As Bloemraad claims, we may find "that something was not always so, or that it is different elsewhere, or for other people."[289] Comparison also highlighted subjectivity and positionality when it came to perceptions and interpretations of migration stories and migrant representations. Additionally, comparing and contrasting news photographs with the textual portrayals of East Germans they related to demonstrated not only many ways of talking about migrations and migrants but also seeing and showing them to others, thus focusing our attention on the modes of representation. Comparison showed that migration stories and migrant identity depictions shifted and changed, were shared or distinct, as well as constructed differently, but they also often meant similar things in separate socio-cultural spaces. This method helped to de-essentialise their depictions and reveal stereotypical thinking surrounding complex migrant identity construction practices and nuanced ways of representing and narrating the 1989 East German migration in the news.

3. 4. Conclusion

The 1989 East German migration is rethought in this research as a transnationally shared, contested, justified, and subverted media discourse with its dominant migration narratives and identity representations of the migrants. Their representations were closely related to the textual and visual depictions of their migration spaces – nation-states encountered – as well as their migration places – West German diplomatic missions in Prague and Warsaw where they sheltered – and state-borders crossed and challenged. Those representations formed migration narratives that conceptualised the process of their movement to local audiences and created its informational discourse. In this comparative exploration of how those representations and migration stories were established and justified throughout the East German migration coverage in the press, this thesis employs theoretical and methodological innovations that set it apart from the established scholarship on the topic. They stem from the adopted interdisciplinary, comparative, and multilingual approaches which combine historical, migration, and media studies and

[288] Irene Bloemraad, "The Promise and Pitfalls of Comparative Research Design in the Study of Migration". *Migration Studies*, 1(1), 22-46, 2013, https://academic.oup.com/migration/article-abstract/1/1/27/941988, (accessed: 27 September 2018), 29.
[289] Ibid.

compare textual and visual portrayals of the East German migrants in the diversity of reported migration settings in the selected English, Polish, and Czech language press. Interpreted with the help of concepts such as (un)familiarity, their identity interpretation challenges the usual sociological framework for studying identities via migrants' assumed alterity and "otherhood". The representations of the migrants and constructions of their migration stories in the Czech, Polish, and English language press are approached as essentially diverse, subjective, and selective. This approach is applied in the next chapter on the English language press portrayals of East Germans as observed in the *Associated Press* news reports. They reflect global liberal democratic informational discourse that surrounded this topic at the time.

4. INTERNATIONAL PRESS

International English language news agency *The Associated Press* (*AP*) provided comprehensive coverage of the 1989 East German emigration from the socialist German Democratic Republic (GDR) to the capitalist Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) via Prague and Warsaw. This research is especially interested in the interviews with East German migrants that were published by the *AP* journalists as they formed the international news discourse on this migration. The agency is the only selected news outlet that gave the migrants an opportunity to share their experiences with a wider audience; their voices remain absent in the reviewed academic literature on the topic in the selected research languages. This chapter contextualises the East German migration within 1989 and presents its international, English language coverage in 205 *AP* news reports. As described in the preceding chapter, this thesis examines the representations of migrants' identities as narrated through socio-politically constructed depictions of migration places (FRG diplomatic missions) and international borders that migrants crossed on their way west, which were intrinsically connected with the definitions provided by their migration spaces (origin, transit, and destination states). First, in order to investigate how the East German migrants were represented, how those representations compared, and what type of migration narratives they formed in the Czech, Polish, and English language press, this chapter discusses how migrations were perceived in 1989 in general. It then explores textual and visual representations of East German migrants in West German diplomatic missions in Prague and Warsaw and state borders they crossed in order to reach Czechoslovakia and Poland.[290] The chapter concludes with a reflection on the core narratives the representations of East German migrants formed in the *Associated Press* news reports to discern dominant ways of reporting on this migration in a western liberal news service.

[290] Only a small number of the *Associated Press* photographs could be analysed in this thesis due to access issues, which, nevertheless, proves a suitable venue for future research on the topic. However, *AP*'s photographs were published in other newspapers, and are used here instead to represent a partial visual rhetoric of the East German migration rather than a detailed documentation of it. Photographs vary in quality but are deemed here essential; in some instances, a better-quality copy, or a link to its location elsewhere, is provided.

4. 1. 1989 migrations

In the summer of 1989, several migrations from state-socialist countries took place across the continent, as reported in the *Associated Press*.[291] Applying Paul Chilton and Mikhail Ilyin's term, the AP's "trans-national political discourse" on these migrations was highly informative in providing a discursive background against which the East German migration narratives and their representations in the English, Czech, and Polish language newspapers could be interpreted.[292] In the summer of 1989, ethnic Hungarians were leaving Romania, Germans and Jews were leaving the Soviet Union, and Turks were being forced out of Bulgaria.[293] As Kevin Costelloe reported, the biggest "wave" "poured" from the Soviet Union as its authorities had "opened a virtual floodgate of emigration", likened to a powerful stream of water which was previously restrained by the "gates" of travel regulations.[294] According to him, 400,000 ethnic German "refugees", "descendants of settlers who themselves sought a better life by heading eastward decades, even centuries ago", emigrated from the Soviet Union "to seek out old homelands" in West Germany.[295] As Costelloe put it, these migrations were influenced by "ethnic tensions often spurred by years of hatred and mistrust", "rising at the time when politicians longingly speak of a "common European home" linking East and West".[296] The leader of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev, incorporated this phrase into his policies on cooperation and reconciliation with western Europe and the US from the second half of the 1980s but was criticised for failing to manage internal tensions and instead liberalised emigration regulations to release it.[297] Since the Soviet leadership had reportedly tried to "stem the flow" of its citizens that was getting out of hand, migrations received a broad depiction in Costelloe's reports as threatening the prospects of cooperation in Europe.[298] These policies "clashed with, and challenged, the [previously upheld] Cold War discourse structures", as Paul Chilton and Mikhail Ilyin defined it,

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[291] "East European Emigration Glance". *Associated Press*, 14 September 1989, (accessed: 12 July 2020).
[292] Paul Chilton and Mikhail Ilyin, "Metaphor in Political Discourse: the Case of the 'Common European House'". *Discourse & Society*, 4(1), 1993, 7-31, https://www.jstor.org/stable/42887835, (accessed: 4 July 2022), 11.
[293] Kevin Costelloe, "Ethnic Conflicts grow in Europe, Soviet Union". *AP*, 29 June 1989.
[294] Ibid.
[295] Ibid.; Kevin Costelloe, "Refugees Pour Across Europe's Borders in Biggest Migration in Years". *AP*, 26 August 1989.
[296] Costelloe, "Ethnic Conflicts grow in Europe, Soviet Union". *AP*, 29 June 1989.; Ondřej Hejma, "Flood of East German refugees resumes after border reopening". *AP*, 1 November 1989.
[297] Neil Malcolm, "The 'Common European Home' and Soviet European Policy". *International Affairs*, 65(4), 1989, 659-676, https://doi.org/10.2307/2622579, (accessed: 7 October 2021), 659: the phrase was used first by Leonid Brezhnev; Chilton and Ilyin "Metaphor in Political Discourse", 8.
[298] Costelloe, "Ethnic Conflicts grow in Europe, Soviet Union".

when reporting on travel and migration in the news.[299] They opened up possibilities for the opponents of strict cross-border regulations to criticise socialist regimes and put pressure on them to enable freer travel and thus reform their systems or change them entirely.

Scholars generally agree that water-related depictions used to discuss migrations as "flowing" and "flooding" invoke the perception that fixed and "safe" structures, like a house, or borders and walls protecting it, crumble in their presence.[300] Concerns over the security of the structure usually become the main focus of policymakers who set out to curtail migrations. In the context of collapsing authoritarian regimes, these and similar depictions may be approached as welcome signifiers of discontent. Indeed, according to Norman M. Naimark, the 1989 East German emigration from East Germany (German Democratic Republic, GDR) to West Germany (Federal Republic of Germany, FRG) threatened "the visions of the construction of a 'common European house'."[301] The "Berlin Wall" and state-socialist regimes crumbled in Hungary following the Hungarian decision on the 2nd of May 1989. Then their reforming socialist government, struggling economically, decided to dismantle instead of renewing its aged electronic barbed wire border system with Austria and officially opened the Hungarian-Austrian border crossing points on the 10th of September.[302] As László Borhí argued, this reformist Hungarian decision did not only question the pace of reforms related to travel in the Soviet Union but also "the very survival of the communist German state" because it incited East Germans holidaying in Hungary to seek passage to West Germany.[303] Yet they were not

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[299] Chilton and Ilyin, "Metaphor in Political Discourse", 8.
[300] Samuel Parker et al., "'It's Time We Invested in Stronger Borders': Media Representations of Refugees Crossing the English Channel by Boat". *Critical Discourse Studies*, 2021, 1-16, https://doi.org/10.1080/17405904.2021.1920998, (accessed 10 Jan 2022), 7.; Katerina Rozakou, "The Violence of Accelerated Time. Waiting and Hasting During 'the Long Summer of Migration' in Greece", 23-40. In: Jacobsen, Ch. M., Karlsen, M.-A., and Khosravi, S., *Waiting and the Temporalities of Irregular Migration*. London; New York: Routledge, 2021, 23.
[301] Norman M. Naimark, "'Ich will hier raus': Emigration and the Collapse of the German Democratic Republic", 72-95. In: Banac, I. *Eastern Europe in Revolution*. Ithaca: Cornell University, 1992, 73.
[302] Gareth Dale, *Popular protest in East Germany, 1945-1989*. London; New York: Routledge, 2005, 140.; Kateryna Oliynyk and Margot Buff, "September 11, 1989: When Hungary Tore a Hole In The Iron Curtain". *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 10 September 1989, https://www.rferl.org/a/hungary-1989-east-germany/30156892.html, (accessed: 27 August 2021); György Jenei, "The Opening of the Hungarian Border for the East German Refugees in 1989: a Public-Policy Analysis of a Key Decision". *Society and Economy*, 34(1), 2012, 163-177, https://www.jstor.org/stable/41472193, (accessed: 29 September 2020), 170.; Kristina Spohr, *Post Wall, Post Square: how Bush, Gorbachev, Kohl, and Deng Shaped the World after 1989*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020, 76-77, 149.
[303] László Borhí, "The International Context of Hungarian Transition, 1989: the View from Budapest", chapter 6, In: McDermott, K. and Stibbe, M. (eds.) *The 1989 Revolutions in Central and Eastern Europe: from Communism to Pluralism*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016, 115.

the target border-crossers – Hungarian authorities were worried about a mass immigration of over 30,000 ethnic Hungarians and Jews who fled Romania because its hardline establishment countered their "right to use their language, and maintain their cultural traditions". [304] The Hungarian-Romanian borders were subject to a bilateral travel agreement ordering the push-backs of emigrants caught fleeing Romania.[305] György Jenei, former advisor of the Hungarian Prime Minister Miklós Németh, claimed that during one such deportation to Romania, an elderly Hungarian man "died of a heart attack".[306] Following this, emigrants from Romania were declared to be "unofficial refugees" who were allowed to "leave for a Western country that would accept them".[307] The Hungarian border and the Warsaw Pact frontiers that formed the so-called "Iron Curtain" were made increasingly permeable.

To what extent were migrating East Germans depicted in the *AP* reports on the Polish and Czechoslovak migration contexts as bargaining with their leaders for travel reforms, threatening the very idea of East-West cooperation, or working towards the demise of the state-socialist Europe? The next part of this chapter explores the *AP* news reports focused on the 1989 East German migration representations related to Prague and Warsaw's West German Embassies.

4. 2. Migration places in Prague and Warsaw

The *Associated Press* representations of the Prague and Warsaw's diplomatic missions of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and the migrants who sheltered there offer essential insight into their identity constructions. The FRG diplomatic missions as migration places also represented the FRG as a political space diplomatically and commented on the Czechoslovak and Polish politics – it was a piece of the FRG in Prague and Warsaw. Hence, the FRG diplomatic missions are understood here as sanctuaries that offered refuge for the East German migrants seeking passage west via often politically inhospitable terrains. Sara Vannini, Ricardo Gomez, Megan Carney, and Katharyne Mitchell noted that the concept of sanctuary had been increasingly discussed against a

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[304] Costelloe, "Refugees Pour Across Europe's Borders in Biggest Migration in Years"; Costelloe, "Ethnic Conflicts grow in Europe, Soviet Union".
[305] Jenei, "The Opening of the Hungarian Border for the East German Refugees in 1989", 166.; on "push-backs", see Silvia Borelli and Ben Stanford, "Troubled Waters in the Mare Nostrum: Interception and Push-Backs of Migrants in the Mediterranean and the European Convention on Human Rights". *Uluslararası Hukuk ve Politika – Review of International Law and Politics*, 10, 2014, 29-69, http://hdl.handle.net/10547/578865, (accessed: 22 June 2022).
[306] Jenei, "The Opening of the Hungarian Border for the East German Refugees in 1989", 166.
[307] Ibid.

threat of deportation, detention, or incarceration, as "a symbol, a set of practices, an ethics, a form of resistance, and a mode of governance".[308] Recently, Patti Tamara Lenard and Laura Madokoro argued that, ultimately, the focus on individuals who seek it "is central to the kinds of sanctuary that may be offered" to them.[309] In the case of the 1989 East German migration west via Czechoslovakia and Poland, the FRG Embassy could be seen as an institution that transformed its foundational rules of operation and became a temporary safe haven for the migrants. The Embassy's extraterritorial rights ensured East Germans migrants' protection from the Czechoslovak, GDR, and the Polish authorities' policies and practices, including the enforcement of their agreements with the GDR that required its citizens to be sent back to the country if they were caught escaping.

4. 2. 1. Prague's pandemonium

The East German migrants began sheltering in Prague's FRG diplomatic mission to pressure their government into allowing their travel to West Germany in July, and in August, Carol J. Williams reported that 20 of them were there.[310] The FRG diplomatic mission in Prague (today the German Embassy) was housed in the Lobkowicz palace in the Malá Strana district (Figure 4-1).[311] In 1989, its back garden was filled with large

Figure 4-1: Lobkowicz Palace - garden at the back of the former West German (present German) diplomatic mission in Prague. Photograph by Raimond Spekking, 2 April 2015.
In: https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:German_Embassy,_Prague,_back_side_with_garden-6587.jpg, (accessed: 6 November 2023)

[308] Sara Vanini et al., "Interdisciplinary Approaches to Refugee and Migration Studies. Lessons from Collaborative Research on Sanctuary in the Changing Times of Trump". *Migration and Society: Advances in Research*, 1, 2018, 164–174, https://doi.org/10.3167/arms.2018.010115, (accessed: 28 Jul 2020), 165.
[309] Patti Tamara Lenard and Laura Madokoro, "The Stakes of Sanctuary". *Migration and Society: Advances in Research*, 4, 2021, 1-15, https://doi.org/10.3167/arms.2021.040102, (accessed: 12 April 2021), 5.
[310] Carol J. Williams, "Bonn Urges East Germans to Leave Embassies in East". *AP*, 9 August 1989.
[311] Alex Bandy, "East Germans Wait in Hungary For Promised Transit West". *AP*, 1 September 1989.; Girard C. Steichen, "Hundreds of East Germans Seek Asylum via West German Embassies". *AP*, 6 August 1989.

white tents for thousands of East Germans who hoped to emigrate to the FRG.[312] East Germans in Prague were neither provided with additional accommodation in premises outside of the Embassy nor allowed to leave its confines.[313] They were only permitted to return to the GDR and apply for an officially-issued permission to leave the country from there, or remain locked within the confines of the diplomatic mission.[314] Although the Czechoslovak Red Cross branch reportedly contributed to maintaining Embassy supplies, the political environment in Czechoslovakia did not promise a welcoming experience for the migrants.[315]

According to the communist parties of the German Democratic Republic, Czechoslovakia, and Poland, the FRG missions in Budapest, Prague, and Warsaw were violating the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and its Article 22 that stipulated the inviolability of the premises of a diplomatic mission from unauthorised entry – of East Germans.[316] Fearing a diplomatic scandal, Rudolf Seiters, the chief of staff of the FRG Chancellor Helmut Kohl, also urged East Germans to "seek legal means of leaving the country to avoid damaging relations between the [two German] nations" and refrain from "creating more problems", thus defining the East German stay at the diplomatic missions as illegal.[317] The argument behind this statement relied on the GDR proclamations that the travel limitations in the country were loosening. Carol J. Williams wrote that East Germans had received 46,434 exit visas in the period between January and August of 1989, which "exceeded the amount of permitted emigrations in the whole of 1988".[318] Recognizing that this liberalisation of the GDR travel regime was less than thousands of East Germans had evidently anticipated, Williams interviewed them and concluded that those sheltering at the FRG diplomatic missions did so "out of frustration over the outlook from emigrating through official channels".[319] One East Berlin chemist

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[312] "More than 300 East Germans Flood Prague Mission". *AP*, 5 September 1989.
[313] Girard C. Steichen, "Hundreds of East Germans Seek Asylum via West German Embassies".; Carol J. Williams, "Embassies Jammed with 3,200 Refugees; Bonn Seeks Easing of Situation". *AP*, 29 September 1989.
[314] Manfred Hees, "East Germany Tells Refugees They Can Emigrate if They Return Home". *AP*, 26 September 1989.
[315] Manfred Hees, "Number of East German Refugees at Prague Embassy Reaches 2,400". *AP*, 28 September 1989.
[316] "Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations". *United Nations*, Treaty Series, 500, 95, 18 April 1961, https://treaties.un.org/doc/Treaties/1964/06/19640624%2002-10%20AM/Ch_III_3p.pdf, (accessed: 12 October 2021), 8.
[317] Carol J. Williams, "Bonn Urges East Germans to Leave Embassies in East". *AP*, 9 August 1989.; Mike Feinsilber, "U.S. Experts Assay the Exodus: Bitter, Emboldened, Furious Germans". *AP*, 5 October 1989.
[318] Williams, "Bonn Urges East Germans to Leave Embassies in East".
[319] Ibid.

told her at the Prague's FRG mission that "everyone has a feeling for where they grew up… but that slips away quickly when you realize that the only way this government can stay in power is to cage people up."[320] In this sense, the East German migrants in Prague and Warsaw were represented as dissatisfied former residents of the GDR who challenged the permissible "official channels" of emigration. Despite observations that the GDR travel system was liberalised in the years prior to 1989, it also became clear that its regulations were not intended to serve the GDR citizens in 1989 but its political establishment as a useful tool for societal control.

Despite their collective aspiration to travel to the FRG, East Germans cannot be viewed as a united group of people who challenged the political system of their state and sought emigration solely due to insufficient travel freedoms. The *AP* news reports highlighted the diversity of their wishes and desires which demonstrated that their identity representations in its news reports went beyond the typical migrant/refugee binary.[321] Many interviewed East Germans were fighting uncertainty at the Prague's FRG Embassy: people wondered when they would be allowed to leave for West Germany and worried about being forgotten by the press. Manfred Hees depicted the migrants as curious and determined people who asked "daily" "What do they think about us in West Germany?" and "Are you writing about us?".[322] Despite being distraught over waiting for their tickets west, most of the East Germans were categorically against returning to the GDR, as the *AP* informed. One of them adamantly claimed that "I leave here only to the West or in a coffin".[323] However, a few hundred "homesick" East Germans did come back to the GDR because their "wives, children and parents [were] left behind, alone or in need of care."[324] The *AP* depicted East Germans in Prague as individuals with varying aspirations, responsibilities, and frustrations, and not all of those who could be defined as "emigrants" ultimately chose emigration.

This heterogeneity of the East German migrants was also noted in the *AP* reports which employed sociological data about them and highlighted the GDR's social

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[320] Girard C. Steichen, "Why East Germans Want to Flee Their Country". *AP*, 17 September 1989.; Manfred Hees, "East Germany Tells Refugees They Can Emigrate if They Return Home". *AP*, 26 September 1989.
[321] Manfred Hees, "Scenes of Hope and Anxiety at West German Embassy". *AP*, 7 October 1989.
[322] Ibid.
[323] Manfred Hees, "East Germans Refuse to Leave Embassy, Despite Harsh Conditions". *AP*, 27 September 1989.
[324] "Only 130 of 1,200 Accept East Berlin Offer, Leave Embassy in Prague". *AP*, 26 September 1989.; Kevin Costelloe, "Some Homesick East Germans Go Home". *AP*, 10 October 1989.

problems. The East German migrants were liberally described by the majority of the *AP* journalists as "refugees" despite them not applying for this established legal status, and most of them were young people, many with families with babies and children.[325] According to data collected by the FRG authorities, which also referred to East Germans as "refugees", over 55% of those who came to the state via the diplomatic missions in Prague and Warsaw were "between 18 and 30 years of age" and "86% had successfully completed high levels of job training".[326] Their previous places of employment in the GDR ranged from heavy industry to the service sector, most of them occupying mid-level positions.[327] Interviewed migrants knew well that their self-proclaimed "workers' state" had been losing talented workers. One of them stated that "we are exactly the kind of people the state doesn't want to leave", and added, giddily, that "this must really be killing the authorities at home".[328] Girard Steichen claimed that many East German migrants came "from the provincial cities where life is the toughest and the harsh crackdown on dissent is a universal complaint".[329] People spoke of a scarcity of building materials and housing, leading young people to postpone family planning for at least 10 years or settle for sharing a dormitory with strangers, which many considered invasive and limiting.[330] Severe shortages in the food industry (staff and products) were also mentioned frequently.[331] It could be argued that members of the older generation of East Germans were missing among the migrants and the young ones were less inclined to get on with their lives of daily shortages as those who may have experienced this in the past. These *AP* reports demonstrated that migrants' woes extended to social welfare provision and economic planning in the GDR and were not limited solely to either economic or political reasons for emigration.

This migration was also depicted as an adventure for the youth who wanted to travel abroad and were outspoken about their dissatisfaction with GDR politics. The East German migration continued into the autumn months and Nadia Rybarová reported for the *AP* that younger East Germans in their early 20s were arriving at the Prague's West

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[325] "Hundreds of East Germans Reported in Prague Embassy". *AP*, 21 September 1989: in Prague "Over 500 Refugees, including 170 Children and Two Pregnant Women".; "Number of Refugees in Prague's Bonn Mission Approaching 900". *AP*, 25 September 1989.
[326] Costelloe, K. "East Germany Rejects Reforms to Stem Refugee Flow". *AP*, 15 September 1989.
[327] Ibid.; Terence Petty, "East Germans Coping with Holes in Work Force". *AP*, 25 September 1989.
[328] Carol J. Williams, "East German Refugee Flood Creates Pool of Low-Cost Workers". *AP*, 24 August 1989.
[329] Girard C. Steichen, "Why East Germans Want to Flee Their Country". *AP*, 17 September 1989.
[330] Ibid. – 26,000 left since May – 17 September; Girard C. Steichen, "East Germans Bring Pollution to West Germany". *AP*, 15 September 1989.
[331] Ibid.; Steichen, "Why East Germans Want to Flee Their Country".

German mission. Her report noted that younger East Germans casually chatted with reporters while sipping beer and boarded buses for the FRG intoxicated and more political than those before them as they demanded "reforms without borders."[332] Rybarová's observations contrasted with previous depictions of people who experienced economic shortages and social restrictions in the GDR. Youth drinking was one of the identified forms of stereotypical delinquency that western media popularly employed in its discussions on "moral panic" in a society.[333] According to Chas Critcher, a "moral panic" is better understood as a discursive formation for managing order in a society and maintaining preferred social norms.[334] Although no interviews with the youth about their behaviour were published in the *AP*, it could be argued that as young people and migrants, those East Germans were cast in such reports through this "media template" as Stanley Cohen's "folk devils", thus compounding the two social categories into a negative representation of both.[335] Their political reasons for emigration were discursively weakened by their reported nonchalant and disorderly behaviour. Although news reports like these showed migrants' diverse life trajectories prior to their migration, they also contributed to their negative representation in the press.

Despite these depictions, the *AP* reporters generally wrote about East Germans in terms of their suffering in Prague due to miserable living conditions at the FRG Embassy. They reported on the surroundings of the FRG Embassy by referring to poor weather conditions, and thus also commented on both the migrants' experiences there and the Czechoslovak establishment. According to Phillip Vannini and Bradely Austin, weather representations affect the depictions of those surrounded by it as "we are immersed within concrete events of weather as a condition of our being-in-the-world".[336] Its use in the migration reporting helped the journalists in "constructing the sense of place" that conceptualised the FRG diplomatic mission in Prague in terms of hostility.[337] The *AP* quoted the official Czechoslovak Communist Party newspaper *Rudé Právo* as its journalists described the place as "a distant reminder of a diplomatic mission" at the start of September 1989 when over 300 people sheltered there.[338] Manfred Hees noted the

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[332] Nadia Rybarová, "East Germans Stream to West German Embassy in Prague". *AP*, 2 November 1989.
[333] Chas Critcher, "Moral Panic Analysis: Past, Present and Future". *Sociology Compass*, 2(4), 2006, 1127-1144, http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9020.2008.00122.x, (accessed: 6 Jul 2022), 1128, 1139.
[334] Ibid., 1140.
[335] Ibid., 1139.
[336] Phillip Vannini and Bradely Austin, "Weather and Place", chapter 11. In: Edensor, T., Kalandides, A., and Kothari, U. (eds.) *The Routledge Handbook of Place*. Oxon; New York: Routledge, 2020, 136.
[337] Ibid., 139-140.
[338] "More than 300 East Germans Flood Prague Mission". *AP*, 5 September 1989.

negative consequences of the East German stay there when he compared the FRG Embassy grounds in the *AP* with its former self – what had been a beautiful "envy of neighbouring diplomats" with its "clipped lawns" had been "churned to mud by the pacing of thousands of East Germans" into "a battlefield" as the cold rain was "pelting down" on them.[339] This textual description of a visually observable phenomenon prodded readers to reflect on the aesthetic semblance of the place described in these reports and other diplomatic missions (and similar governmental institutions) they may be familiar with. According to the report, the former palace of a noble Czech family and an official governmental institution – an Embassy – was unrecognisable during the East German stay there.

Not all *AP* reports used reflections on the Embassy aesthetics to portray the East German migrants or the FRG officials negatively. Instead, the majority of them used the trope of "bad weather" to criticise the migration space that hosted it – Czechoslovakia and, by extension, its communist government and their GDR allies. Their unaccommodating attitude towards the migrants and the FRG diplomatic staff, struggling to provide adequate living conditions to people on their premises, contributed to sympathetic representations of East Germans in the *AP*. Hees reported that "several thousand" East Germans were forced to queue for "4 or 5 hours to use one of the two toilets available" as well as wait for showers and beds – when none were available, people slept in shifts.[340] These representations, following Harsha Walia's theorisations, could be interpreted as having had served both to depict migrants as "poor victims" of cruel political regimes, devoid of empathy for their squalor, and as "heroic survivors" for persevering in their decision to emigrate despite experienced neglect.[341] East Germans were depicted in the *AP* as victims who were forced to endure adverse living conditions at the FRG Embassy in Prague by hostile Czechoslovak authorities, and also responsible for the dilapidation of the Lobkowitz Palace and its pristine lawns.

The Czechoslovak communist establishment's hostility towards East Germans in Prague was also reflected in the *AP* textually and visually by depictions of local police violence around the FRG diplomatic mission and related directives that encapsulated the (unsuccessful) East German migration management in the state. On the 30th of September,

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[339] Manfred Hees, "Scenes of Hope and Anxiety at West German Embassy". *AP*, 7 October 1989.
[340] Hees, "Scenes of Hope and Anxiety at West German Embassy".
[341] Harsha Walia, *Border and Rule: Global Migration, Capitalism, and the Rise of Racist Nationalism*. Chicago, Illinois: Haymarket Books, 2021, 2.

the West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, one of the main diplomatic negotiators responsible for the arrival of the East German migrants to the FRG, announced from FRG Embassy in Prague that more than 3,500 East Germans gathered there could leave for the FRG via the GDR territory.[342] According to Hees, this GDR decision was interpreted as a "face-saving measure permitting East Germany to say that it had allowed the emigres to go to West Germany from its territory and not from Czechoslovakia", implying an appearance of control of its citizens by an act of expulsion from the GDR state.[343] It was a punitive measure for their "illegal" defection to the FRG via third-countries rather than a human rights victory for the emigrants.[344] The *AP* reports reinforced the view of this decision as a moral and liberal victory of the East German migrants.[345] However, it was not only pertinent for the migrants to escape from the GDR but also from Czechoslovakia. Hees interviewed a Red Cross volunteer who defined the surroundings of the FRG mission, controlled by the Czechoslovak authorities, as a "pandemonium" where "injured refugees" were beaten by the Czechoslovak police officers, who "clubbed [them] like mad", or who were "caught on the sharp spikes at the top of the [diplomatic mission's back] fence".[346] Textual representations of the territory invited those reading, hopefully familiar with John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, to fully catastrophise its surroundings into the capital of Hell.[347] Despite the use of strong, vivid terms to describe the Embassy territory in Prague, the *AP* journalists did not take them for granted. Hees interviewed a young East German woman, who claimed that several officers helped her family to access the Embassy premises.[348] He concluded that the police behaviour was "alternately harsh and lenient".[349] The Czechoslovak authorities

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[342] Manfred Hees, "East Germans in Prague, Warsaw Allowed to Emigrate to West Germany". *AP*, 30 September 1989
[343] Ibid.
[344] Mary Elise Sarotte, *The Collapse: the Accidental Opening of the Berlin Wall*. New York: Basic Books, 2014, 28
[345] Mandred Hees, "East Germany Lets Holdouts Go West but Clamps Down on Further Travel". *AP*, 3 October 1989.
[346] Ibid.
[347] "Pandemonium." *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/pandemonium, (accessed: 5 May 2022).
[348] Hees, "Diplomatic Hassle Brews as More East Germans Enter Prague Embassy".
[349] Hees, "East Germany Lets Holdouts Go West but Clamps Down on Further Travel".

could not guarantee a collectively hostile response of its police officers to this migration, which also made it unlikely that they would be able to halt this emigration through its territory completely, nor it could offer welcoming hospitality officially.

Despite positive representations of the Czechoslovak hospitality towards East Germans, one of the most internationally recognised photographs of this migration in Prague, captured by the *AP* photographers, established the surroundings of the FRG Embassy visually as a "pandemonium" and the Embassy itself as a sanctuary (Fig. 4-2). A man was depicted being dragged down from the FRG Embassy fence by a Czechoslovak police officer as he attempted to climb over it. Other policemen were shown in the background while no other East Germans were pictured on the Czechoslovak side of the fence, which implied a disproportionate use of force against those aiming to reach the FRG sanctuary. Observant viewers could also notice other people's hands, outstretched through the fence from inside the "sanctuary", on the left side in the photograph. In this sense, the figure of the climber represented other East Germans who had made it to safety either by scaling the Embassy's "Wall" themselves or by arriving through its official gates, thus showing the two modes of the East German experience in Prague – in and outside of the Embassy compound. One of the *AP* reports claimed that among those witnessing the incident, an unidentified FRG diplomat ran towards the fence and "put his arm around the refugee".[350] As reported, the police officer let the East German in the photograph go, pointed to another East German, handcuffed to a bench nearby (invisible in the photograph), and asked if the diplomat wanted that person as well – the FRG diplomat arranged for both of them to be allowed entry into the Embassy. John Berger's conviction appears correct as he maintained that "the reciprocal nature of vision is more fundamental than that of spoken dialogue".[351] Nevertheless, rare


Prague policeman pulls on coat of an East German to try to prevent him from climbing fence to West German Embassy.

Figure 4-2: "Prague policeman pulls on coat of an East German to try to prevent him from climbing fence to West German Embassy." AP
In: Blaine Harden, "Czechs Fail to Stem New Refugee Flood". *The Washington Post*, 3 October 1989.

[350] Manfred Hees, "Diplomatic Hassle Brews as More East Germans Enter Prague Embassy". *AP*, 2 October 1989.
[351] John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*. London: BBC and Penguin, 1972, 6.

interviews with migrants on help and aid from the police officers in Prague shed necessary light on the roles unpredictability and lack of support for the Czechoslovak migration management strategies played in the news on this migration. Both textual and visual representations demonstrated the variety of East German migration experiences and pointed towards the limits of the Czechoslovak communist regime's capabilities regarding the control of this migration and its discourse.

The most common visual depictions of East Germans in the *AP* reports on the situation in Prague, however, represented them as "scaling the wall" of the Embassy garden in groups. Arguably, for many this wall which separated them from the FRG sanctuary was more vital to overcome than the actual "Wall". Group representations of nameless migrants, which correspond with Tanya Sheehan's observation of a "consistent visual rhetoric" that depicts people on the move and borders through pity-inducing tropes, as distraught, unwelcome wanderers and beggars could also be seen here as ambivalent rather than overtly negative.[352] These and similar depictions could be interpreted as conveying the rush and scale of the migrants' collective consensus to leave the GDR state from the western Cold War perspective (Figs. 4-3, 4-4, 4-5). A visual of a lone emigrant from the GDR could not symbolically stand in for a group of them if the aim of the shot was to depict the overwhelming collapse of the GDR's socialist project. Images like these

Figure 4-3: Thousands of East Germans boarded trains in Prague for passage to the West. They crowded the street outside the West German Embassy as they waited for buses to take them to the trains."
AP
In: Serge Schmemann, "Refugees in Prague to Leave for West". *The New York Times*, 4 October 1989, a1.

[352] Tanya Sheehan, *Photography and Migration*. Abingdon, Oxon; New York: Routledge, 2018, [p. 1].


East German refugees scaling the wall of the West German Embassy in Prague yesterday.

Figure 4-4: "East German refugees scaling the wall of the West German Embassy in Prague yesterday."
AP
In: John Tagliabue, "Chilly Days for East Germans Outside Embassy in Prague". *The New York Times*, 30 September 1989, 4.

East Germans climbing a ladder to scale the wall of the West German Embassy in Prague yesterday after the embassy doors were closed because of overcrowding.

Figure 4-5: "East Germans climbing a ladder to scale the wall of the West German Embassy in Prague yesterday after the embassy doors were closed because of overcrowding."
AP
In: Serge Schmemann, "More than 6,000 East Germans Swell Tide of Emigrés to the West". *The New York Times*, 2 October 1989, a1.

helped to illustrate and amplify the failure of communist establishments to support their populations. It was communicated via textual and visual representations of the East German migration as a collective choice. The FRG diplomatic mission, as the East German migration destination space, was portrayed positively as a sanctuary for thousands of East Germans.

Although visuals relaying rush and chaos in the *AP* were used to represent the East German migration, depictions of calmness also accompanied their English language news. Paradoxically, as more of them hurried to the Embassies, both those arriving and those overseeing the arrivals were shown as composed and patient (Fig. 4-6). The photograph contrasted with previous depictions of migrants as it showed several people


As refugees were arriving in West Germany, other East Germans trying to get into the Bonn embassy in Prague found the entrance blocked by Czechoslovak police. They were later allowed in.

Figure 4-6: "As refugees were arriving in West Germany, other East Germans trying to get into the Bonn embassy in Prague found the entrance blocked by Czechoslovak police. They were later allowed in."
AP
In: John Tagliabue, "More East Germans Sneak into Embassy in Prague". *The New York Times*, 2 October 1989, a8.

calmly sitting with two police officers standing behind them in the background in front of a wall or doors. A woman was the focus of this shot, clad in a thick sweater, wearing big sunglasses and looking away, pictured on the right-hand side of a man in jeans and a leather jacket, directing his gaze instead at a small child in front of him with another one standing behind the woman. This visual portrayed the migrants to the *AP* readers as their contemporaries and not as plighted by homelessness and privations, which become dangerous and stigmatising tropes for representing individuals on the move. Zygmunt Bauman's reflections on Ryszard Kapuściński's "gap between seeing and knowing" seem appropriate to consider here as they comment on inability of observers of migrants to see them as complexly as they tend to see themselves. As Bauman paraphrased, "depending on what is presented to view, the absorption of images may thwart rather than prompt and facilitate the assimilation of knowledge".[353] If the depicted people were shown and spoken of as sad, crying, anguished, and dressed in inconspicuous, simple-looking clothes, those viewing this photograph and reading in the press about their plight and the humanitarian help they received may have sympathised more with East Germans, if they had not before. Yet this depiction may have limited the extent of sympathy and understanding because "they were just like us". As Peter Gatrell argued, "hierarchies of acceptance" govern our thinking about migrating individuals.[354] Visual aesthetics, as well as behavioural patterns, have a role to play in distorted perceptions about them: those shown in tattered clothes, with a solemn facial expression, usually receive more support than those who may look like the readers themselves in contemporary fashionable clothes, or seem unbothered by the supposed hardship around them. This way of thinking reveals a privileged position of those who observe a migration rather than experience it. Certain depictions of East German migrants in the *AP*, although attempting to reflect on the complicated human condition during a migration, may have worked against their generally empathetic reporting style.

The *AP* journalists attempted to relay the living conditions of East Germans at the Prague's West German Embassy through poetic depictions. Hees commented on the lingering presence of the migrants in Prague after their first departures to West Germany took place.[355] His report spoke of individual lives lived in Prague by focusing on material

[353] Zygmunt Bauman, *Society under Siege*. Cambridge: Polity; Malden: Blackwell Pub., 2002, 212.
[354] Peter Gatrell, The Unsettling of Europe: The Unsettling of Europe: How Migration Reshaped a Continent. New York: Basic Books, 2019, loc. 629-631.
[355] Manfred Hees, "Scenes of Hope and Anxiety at West German Embassy". *AP*, 7 October 1989.

possessions the migrants left behind as well as dramatic scenes of brief separation at the Embassy garden fence just days before:

> "At the edge of the fence, a broken baby carriage, a single abandoned shoe. Mothers and fathers lifted their babies over the fence placing them in the hands of strangers, the panic of separation written on their faces for the eternal moments before they themselves clambered over to join them, unsure if police would move in to stop them."

A damaged baby carriage and a lost shoe suggested that an East German infant had been on their way to the FRG in this uniquely poetic reflection for a high-brow news service on the living conditions of the migrants at the Prague's FRG Embassy. Climbing the fence was a stressful and dangerous endeavour owing to the possibility of being intercepted by local militia and having to part with their babies even for a second. Hence, East Germans left a trace in their migration place and their migration transit space. Stories like this appealed to the readers' empathy and emphasised the present absences of things, events, and people in migration settings. It also showed that all the nameless migrating people in mass photographs have life stories to tell and their absence does not erase them.

The FRG Embassy, representing a microcosm at the heart of a bustling Czechoslovak capital, offered *AP* reporters a close look at various events and processes in and around this migration place. For instance, the *AP* reported on hospitality between local Prague residents and East German migrants. Hospitality may be interpreted as a practiced potential response to an encounter. Michel Agier defined it as any physical or verbal response to a stranger, because even "a single gesture can transform the stranger into a guest, even if he or she still continues to be a stranger to some extent".[356] Practices of hospitality were often at odds with the governmental prescriptions of hostile normative conduct for its police officers, for instance, as they tried to stop East Germans from accessing the Embassy compound. According to Agier, hospitality often becomes synonymous with solidarity in settings of inhospitality or outright hostility.[357] Harald Bauder and Lorelle Juffs defined solidarity as a conception "centred on mutual understanding, sympathy, and empathy", that ranges from "making charitable gifts to offering support due to identification with the victim".[358] Initially, local Prague residents

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[356] Michel Agier (tr. Helen Morrison), *The Stranger as My Guest: a Critical Anthropology of Hospitality*. Cambridge; Medford: Polity Press, 2021 [2018], 1, 21.
[357] Ibid., 44.
[358] Harald Bauder and Lorelle Juffs, "Solidarity in the Migration and Refugee Literature: Analysis of a Concept". *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 46(1), 2020, 46-65, https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2019.1627862, (accessed: 20 May 2022), 50.

were represented as indifferent to the East German migration but they reportedly warmed to them eventually and displayed these "compassionate gestures", as *AP's* Nesha Starcevic defined it.[359] According to *AP* reports, locals provided East Germans with food and warm clothes while they waited outside the FRG Embassy, celebrated their perseverance and wished safe travels at the train station as East Germans left for the FRG.[360] Local hospitality as solidarity, then, brought Prague residents and East Germans together "against the principles championed by distant and hostile governments with their focus solely on the defence of the nation, of identity, of territory".[361] Hopeful that this migration would bring change to his state, a 40-year-old Czechoslovak confided in the *AP's* reporter Boehmer and said "of course they [East Germans] are running away" – "they want freedom. I am sure this will have some impact on our country… but it will take a while because our leadership is very conservative."[362] Yet this solidarity was not transformed into a collective action. Allison Smale reflected that despite the documented "small acts of rebellion", it appeared that the East German "exodus" offered "no [local] stimulus to mass protest" against the Czechoslovak regime or in solidarity with the emigrants.[363] These findings largely correspond to Tůma, Kopeček, and Čermák's views on the Czechoslovak society's response towards East Germans – ambivalence and individual decision to aid dominated its hospitality practices.[364] The *AP* reports introduced Czechoslovak voices into the East German migration narrative who confirmed that they sympathised and solidarised with the migrants but felt incapable of rising up against their own ultra-conservative leadership, similar to the one East Germans were running away from.

One incident changed the course of East German migration to the FRG. *AP*'s Nesha Starcevic reported that the "freedom trains" that left Prague on the 30th of September west

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[359] Nesha Starcevic, "Refugee Train Arrives; More East Germans Try to Board in Dresden". *AP*, 5 October 1989.; Manfred Hees, "Scenes of Hope and Anxiety at West German Embassy".
[360] Ibid.
[361] Agier, The Stranger as My Guest, 21.
[362] G. Boehmer, "Freedom Train Carrying Refugees Arrives in West Germany". *AP*, 6 October 1989.; Allison Smale, "Czechoslovaks Wonder When Change Will Come". *AP*, 29 October 1989.
[363] Allison Smale, "In Kafka's city, Ironies abound". *AP*, 31 October 1989; Allison Smale, "Czechoslovaks Wonder When Change Will Come". *AP*, 29 October 1989.
[364] Oldřich Tůma, "9:00, "Praha-Libeň, horní nádraží: exodus východních němců přes prahu v září 1989". *Soudobé dějiny*, 6(2/3), 1999, 147-164, , http://www.usd.cas.cz/casopis/soudobe-dejiny-2-3-1999/, (accessed: 8 April 2019), 150.; Karel Čermák, "Jací jsme?". *Lidové noviny*, 2(10), October 1989, https://www.lidovky.cz/historie-obrazem?objekt=popup&datum=1989_10&stranka=1, (accessed: 12 February 2022), 4.; Lubomír Kopeček, "Za svobodou přes komunistické Československo. Příběh východoněmeckých uprchlíků v Praze a jeho dopady". *Kontexty*, 11(5), 2019, 3-10, https://casopiskontexty.cz/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/kontexty-5-2019.pdf, (accessed: 14 June 2021).

via East German territory were to be sealed shut until they reached the FRG.[365] As Kristina Spohr argued that despite their cheerful name, the image of sealed trains evoked an unsettling visual, reminiscent of some of the darkest times in European history in the region – mass deportations of people to concentration camps and post-war expulsions of ethnic Germans from central European states.[366] Except this time East Germans wanted to board the trains in the Dresden train station, screaming "We want out!" and jamming the train tracks.[367] They hurled rocks at local riot police trying to disperse crowds with batons and water cannons.[368] Witnesses said following trains from the FRG Embassies had to wait or detour to avoid rioting on the tracks to the FRG.[369] Allison Smale interviewed an East German who intended to board one of those trains but after witnessing the harsh GDR police behaviour at Dresden which, according to him, contradicted the image of the GDR "as a peace-loving state", thus influencing him to stay and attend demonstrations against the regime.[370] Hundreds of those on the "freedom trains" and in Dresden and other towns became emigrants, and would-be emigrants became protesters, which implies that Oldřich Tůma was correct to challenge A. O. Hirschmann's theory on the "voice", "exit", and "loyalty" relations.[371] Emigrants and protesters were individuals rather than collective movements, he argued, and their disillusionment with the East German identity espoused by the national myths of its communist party blurred the distinctions between emigrants and protesters. At times such as this, "exit" led to even more emigrant but also even became "voice" at different stages of East Germans' falling out with their regime.

4. 2. 2. Warsaw's sanctuary

In order to prevent similar incidents and future "Dresdens", the Communist Party of the German Democratic Republic instituted a requirement for would-be emigrants to obtain a visa in order to enter Czechoslovakia at the beginning of October 1989. Prior to this, Czechoslovakia had been the only socialist state that was exempt from this rule. The number of individuals travelling to the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in

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[365] Nesha Starcevic, "Refugee Train Arrives; More East Germans Try to Board in Dresden". *AP*, 5 October 1989.; Boehmer, "Freedom Train Carrying Refugees Arrives in West Germany".
[366] Kristina Spohr, *Post Wall, Post Square*, 117.
[367] Nesha Starcevic, "Refugee Train Arrives; More East Germans Try to Board in Dresden". *AP*, 5 October 1989.
[368] Ibid.
[369] Ibid.; Boehmer, "Freedom Train Carrying Refugees Arrives in West Germany".
[370] Allison Smale, "Young Families Pouring Over Border into West". *AP*, 5 November 1989.
[371] Tůma, "9:00, Praha-Libeň, horní nádraží", 148.

Prague had significantly decreased but a new route leading to Warsaw opened up for the East German emigrants aiming to reach West German Embassy sanctuaries. East Germans were required to have visas and clearances in order to cross the GDR-Polish borders, and hundreds of them did that without being sure about their reception in the country once they arrived.[372] After Prague, the FRG Embassy in Warsaw in the district of Saska Kępa became a second mass shelter for East Germans heading to West Germany (Fig. 4-7).[373]

Figure 4-7: The location of the former FRG Embassy in Warsaw until 2007. Photograph by picture-alliance / dpa.

In: "Historia Ambasady Niemiec w Warszawie", https://polen.diplo.de/pl-pl/01-vertretungen/01-1-die-botschaft/03-geschichte-botschaft/-/548812, (accessed: 6 November 2023).

After Hungary officially opened its borders with Austria on the 10th of September, *AP*'s Deborah G. Steward interviewed a 9-year-old East German boy in Warsaw's FRG Embassy who claimed that as of the 14th of September, there were 60 people there, while the governmental officials claimed that they "did not know" the number.[374] Warsaw's FRG Embassy could only house a fraction of the number of East Germans who stayed in Prague so a deal between the Polish government, various charity organisations, hotels, hostels, and the Polish Catholic Church was brokered, allowing East Germans to be housed around Warsaw.[375] That meant that East Germans in the Polish capital were not confined to the Embassy compound which reduced the probability of tensions arising from overcrowding, which and promised to be a far more welcoming experience for the

[372] G. Boehmer, "New Refugees Roll into the West on Possibly the Last Freedom Train". *AP*, 6 October 1989.
[373] "East Germans Take Refuge in West German Embassy in Poland". *AP*, 13 September 1989: 50 East Germans there.
[374] Deborah G. Seward, "East Germans in Warsaw Embassy Hoping to Go West". *AP*, 14 September 1989.
[375] Nesha Starcevic, "400 New Refugees Arrive in West Germany, Some Moved from Warsaw Embassy". *AP*, 20 September 1989.

migrants. By mid-October, there were 950 East Germans sheltering in the Polish capital.[376] Warsaw's better thought-out shelter system was praised early in the *AP* migration reporting, also reflected in the representations of the Embassy grounds, the Polish authorities, and the migrants themselves.[377]

Similarly to their Czechoslovak counterparts, the Polish authorities were generally depicted by *AP* journalists as indecisive about and initially reluctant to assist around 6,000 East Germans in their territory. *AP* quoted a warning found in *Gazeta Wyborcza*, which represented the independent trade union "Solidarność", that while "Hungary's attitude [towards East German migrants] may evoke sympathy", "as a state we should not follow their example or even praise them loudly".[378] This initial stance surprisingly depicted the communist and liberal members of the government as united on this issue. Concerns for migrants could have been seen as peripheral in comparison to domestic problems in Poland: economic crisis, the remaining communist party element in the government, the precarious geopolitical location of Poland between the Soviet Union and East Germany, and economic dependency on West German loans. *AP*'s reports make it clear, then, that the new Polish commitments to liberalism and international human rights, embodied by the trade union members in the government, were initially overshadowed by the political ties of the former government. That included East German deportations from the state under the 1969 bilateral travel agreement with the GDR.[379] But like the migrants, Poland was in transit itself: from state-socialism to democratic liberalism.

Despite that, the Polish route was depicted in the *AP* as a more welcoming experience than in Czechoslovakia as reports on hospitable encounters became prevalent. Reports about "the refugees" receiving food bought for them in hotels and markets in Warsaw by local residents, as well as West German Red Cross and other charity donations, represented organised aid and spontaneous support in Poland's capital.[380] As the East German migration continued in the country, the Polish political establishment contributed additional train carriages for East Germans traveling to West Germany and negotiated an agreement with East Germany in mid-October to allow the migrants in

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[376] John Daniszewski, "Poland Says East Germany Agrees to Let Refugees Leave". *AP*, 14 October 1989: apart from seminary in Tarchomin and hotels in Warsaw, shelter in Konstancin.
[377] Starcevic, "400 New Refugees Arrive in West Germany, Some Moved from Warsaw Embassy".
[378] Seward, "East Germans in Warsaw Embassy Hoping to Go West".
[379] Starcevic, "400 New Refugees Arrive in West Germany, Some Moved from Warsaw Embassy".
[380] John Daniszewski, "East Germans in Poland Ready for Trip West". *AP*, 30 September 1989.; John Daniszewski, "Refugees in Poland Join Exodus to West". *AP*, 5 October 1989.; John Daniszewski, "More East Germans Flock to Warsaw Embassy After Train for West Leaves". *AP*, 1 October 1989.

Poland to fly to West Germany after they renounce their GDR citizenship and apply for a FRG citizenship in Warsaw.[381] The *AP* quoted Bronislaw Geremek, "Solidarność" parliamentary leader, claiming that "the same values and freedoms we fight for should be present in Polish foreign policy" and that "human rights and international conventions governing free movement of refugees should be the first consideration".[382] This commentary represented the liberal wing of the Polish government in October 1989. East Germans reportedly noticed these acts of support and solidarity. *AP* journalist Boehmer interviewed a man who confessed that "I'm not the type who gets tears in my eyes, but this time I felt something deep down", suggesting migrants were touched by the Polish support.[383] Depictions of Polish hospitality towards the migrants evoked their gratitude.

Reports on encounters between local Poles and East Germans also let the *AP* readership to reflect on certain commonalities across temporal and cultural dimensions between the people on the move. Before leaving the FRG diplomatic mission in Warsaw in the hopes to join those before them on "freedom trains" from Prague, many East Germans sold their vehicles to local Poles at discount prices for hard currency, handed over their car or apartment keys to Embassy officials or local residents in order for them to arrange for the cars to be sent to the FRG once they settled or as a gift for the welcome they had received during their stay in the country.[384] Locals were depicted as practical people who did not think it immoral to take advantage of this opportunity. They reflected "that the shoe was on the other foot when Poles fled their homeland following the imposition of martial law in 1981" and had to part with their long-awaited and expensive vehicles in order to be able to start a new chapter in their lives in East Germany, among other countries many Poles emigrated to.[385] These reports emphasised that those who had experienced or witnessed emigrations themselves demonstrated an understanding of what this process involved – compromising with new realities, dealing with shortcomings, being the "have-nots" and the vulnerable, and swallowing pride in order to move forward. These *AP* news reports portrayed the migrants as determined individuals with agency and locals as aware of historical and political contexts that defined migrations, including their

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[381] Carol J. Williams, "125 East German refugees fly from Warsaw to West Germany". *AP*, 17 October 1989.; Deborah G. Seward, "East Germans Get Exit Permits to Go West". *AP*, 16 October 1989.; John Daniszewski, "Solidarity Newspaper Reports Refugees Returned Against Will". *AP*, 9 October 1989.
[382] Daniszewski, "Solidarity Newspaper Reports Refugees Returned Against Will".
[383] G. Boehmer, "New Refugees Roll into the West on Possibly the Last Freedom Train". *AP*, 6 October 1989.
[384] "East German refugees' cars going for bargain prices". *AP*, 5 October 1989.
[385] Ibid.

own past ones, which mixed solidarity with rationality in conceptualising processes of human mobilities as requiring sacrifices.

Contrary to the *AP* reports on the Czechoslovak routes, the reports on the Polish one claimed East Germans were also engaged in self-representation practices in Warsaw. One of them was related to their vehicles and involved removing the GDR licence plates from their "Trabant" and "Wartburg" cars. Teddy Weyr argued in the *AP* that it was "a symbol that their owners did not plan to return to East Germany".[386] East Germans were depicted as proudly removing the letters "DDR" (standing for "Deutsche Demokratische Republik", or GDR) from their licence plates and leaving only the first letter there, signifying "German", while others painted over the "red-black-and-gold insignias on the vehicles, but left off the hammer and sickle that distinguished the East German flag from West Germany's".[387] This demonstrated that their perceived identities were subjectively negotiated and selected despite their manufactured national belonging as "citizens of the GDR". Also, while a few of them depicted themselves as "German", others saw themselves as "East German" and socialist, thus shattering any (western) assumptions that they refused socialism or their homeland with their emigration. However, the majority of the migrants was depicted using any means necessary to signal their new identities and their changes as they added stickers from "a European cigarette company declaring "Let's Go West"" or a West German charter airline saying "Nothing Like Getting Out of Here" to their cars and bags.[388] Rather than being spoken of and to in the *AP*, East Germans in Warsaw were speaking for themselves and criticising the Cold War order, past and present, that was imposed on them. The migrants challenged many ideological assumptions present at that time in the Cold War Europe – one of the most important ones was that they left behind their East German and socialist identities in the GDR, or that they completely embraced their potential West German and capitalist ones.

Following the GDR government's fiasco with the Dresden railway station riot and the negative publicity it attracted, the East German leadership was swayed by the Polish authorities to allow East Germans in Warsaw to renounce their GDR citizenship in the

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[386] "Only 130 of 1,200 Accept East Berlin Offer, Leave Embassy in Prague". *AP*, 26 September 1989.; Teddy Weyr, "Jubilant East German Refugees Pour into the West". *AP*, 10 September 1989.
[387] Manfred Hees, "East German Refugees Expect to Leave Hungary Soon". *AP*, 10 September 1989.; Manfred Hees, "East Germans Refuse to Leave Embassy, Despite Harsh Conditions". *AP*, 27 September 1989.; Marcus Eliason, "The Post-Postwar Era: West Unites, East Fragments". *AP*, 16 September 1989.; Imre Karacs, "East Germans Expected to Enter Austria: Refugees in Hungary Wait for Final Plans". *The Washington Post*, 2 September 1989.
[388] George Jahn, "East German Diplomats Try to Dissuade Would-Be Refugees". *AP*, 6 September 1989.

GDR Embassy and fly out of Poland to the FRG by mid-October 1989.[389] East Germans interviewed at the Polish Catholic Church seminary in Tarchomin, said that "things were wild" when they heard this news.[390] This depiction is comparable to how East Germans in Prague greeted the news on the 30th of September that those at the West German Embassy were allowed to go to West Germany. The GDR Ambassador to Poland, Juergen Van Zwoll, said that the migrants would "enter this Embassy as East German citizens and leave it in practice as West German ones", which temporarily made them stateless upon request before obtaining a FRG passport from the FRG Embassy.[391] Yet this legal shift from "East" to "West", according to Carol J. Williams, was slow because Van Zwoll invoked concerns for the West German residents' safety – "we cannot allow any murderers to leave."[392] The association of migrants with criminals betrayed the official GDR attitudes towards them and contradicted the expressed altruism of its leadership in their reasoning behind allowing for them to travel to West Germany. Deborah G. Seward's East German interviewee claimed that dissent in the GDR was weak and marginal so the GDR communist party should be confronted by the population it controlled – their "protest was to leave".[393] By choosing emigration, East Germans modified their relationships with their state and forged new ones not only with the FRG but also with Poland.[394] They renegotiated their legal belonging on their own terms and established "exit" as "voice" as two inseparable reactions to a failing governance of the GDR.

As the new GDR leader Egon Krenz, who was allegedly more progressive than his ultra-conservative predecessor Erich Honecker, came to power at the end of October, he discontinued the visa requirement for entering Czechoslovakia from the GDR and announced amnesty to around 4000 imprisoned people under the charge of "flight from

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[389] John Daniszewski, "East Berlin Allows More in Poland to Emigrate". *AP*, 14 October 1989.
[390] Nadia Rybarová, "East Germans Stream to West German Embassy in Prague". *AP*, 2 November 1989: Prague's GDR Embassy was also allowed the same procedure.
[391] Deborah G. Seward, "East Germans Get Exit Permits to Go West". *AP*, 16 October 1989.; Deborah G. Seward, "East Germans Wait to Travel West, Others Escape". *AP*, 15 October 1989: "My protest is to leave".
[392] Carol J. Williams, "125 East German Refugees Fly from Warsaw to West Germany". *AP*, 17 October 1989.
[393] Seward, "East Germans Wait to Travel West, Others Escape".
[394] Ibid.; Mike Feinsilber, "They Voted With Their Feet, and The Wall Came Tumbling Down". *AP*, 11 November 1989.

the republic" as a measure of the new government's good will.[395] Those former prisoners were likely caught by the East German, Hungarian, Czechoslovak, and Polish border guards and deported back to the GDR, which would mean that prior to expressions of hospitality, the Polish and Czechoslovak societies were complicit in deterrence policies their political leadership authorised. As *AP*'s Terrence Petty claimed, the East German emigration "helped prod East German leaders into calling for social reform", thus he argued that the migrants must have felt proud of this achievement.[396] But an interview with a migrant named Mrs. Schwolow revealed that many felt "sadness that such a decision […] had to be taken" for them to enjoy the dignified life they were promised by their communist party leaders.[397] According to her, the emigrants had "given up everything" – "we left behind friends, relatives, and siblings. It is sad that leaving was our only choice".[398] More mixed feelings followed.[399] A few interviewed East German migrants in Prague and Warsaw "could not imagine the Communist Party not being in control", which spoke volumes about their own life experiences in East Germany and the lack of alternatives to communist rule.[400] This focus on the migrants' own reflections on their emigration space show the success of nationalist myths that governed the identity construction of an East German citizen in the state-socialist dictatorship. A future other than a communist one was not imaginable and East Germans, with sadness, abandoned hope that the GDR could be different and moved forward as it was the only option they thought they had left.

4. 3. Borders

The very premise of this migration was the inability of the East German population to reach their West German friends, family, and colleagues directly through the GDR-FRG borders due to travel restrictions. On their way to West Germany through Poland and

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[395] G. C. Steichen, "Gov't Amnesty For Escapees, Demonstrators; Lifts Travel Rule". *AP*, 27 October 1989: visa requirement for Czechoslovakia was in place in October 1989 only; Ondřej Hejma, "Flood of East German Refugees Resumes After Border Reopening". *AP*, 1 November 1989; "Chronology of exodus from East Germany". *AP*, 2 November 1989.
[396] Terence Petty, "Refugees Doubt Prospects For Real Improvement in East Germany". *AP*, 4 November 1989.
[397] Ibid.
[398] Ibid.
[399] Disbelief in reforms but hope, i. e. G. C. Steichen, "Not Quite Glasnost, but East German Media Have Discovered Debate". *AP*, 22 October 1989.; disbelief in reforms, i. e. "Communists Hold Monopoly on Power". *AP*, 8 November 1989.; Manfred Hees, "Refugees Converge on West German Embassy Despite Open Border". *AP*, 4 November 1989.; Kevin Costelloe, "Refugees Crowd Border Crossings, Predictions of More to Come". *AP*, 5 November 1989.
[400] Terence Petty, "Refugees Doubt Prospects for Real Improvement in East Germany". *AP*, 4 November 1989.

Czechoslovakia, East Germans encountered a variety of border regimes which shifted during the six months of this migration. Representations of those borders attested to their changing nature and functions despite a general political perception of them in Poland and Czechoslovakia as unalterable. The GDR establishment also understood borders as such, but was eventually forced to lift its own "Iron Curtain" on the 9th of November, as Patrick Major aptly put it, "in a desperate gamble to persuade East Germans to stay" in the state.[401] Lorenz M. Lüthi and Julia Sonnevend also maintained that the opening of the "Berlin Wall" was intended as yet another governmental compromise aimed at stopping the East German emigration to the FRG via Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Poland.[402]

4. 3. 1. Danger at the Czechoslovak frontiers

AP depicted the Czechoslovak borders as hostile and dangerous. In turn, East German migrants were represented as brave people for embarking on perilous journeys across them. As Reece Jones explained, policies based on a notion that walls and borders deter migrating individuals instead make their migration more dangerous and cost migrating people's lives – the dominant representations of the Czechoslovak and East German response to this migration was not that different from contemporary practices of migrant deterrence.[403] On the 18th of September, the *AP* published one of the first reports of an East German man drowning in the Danube while trying to reach the Hungarian riverbanks from the Czechoslovak border.[404] According to it, "the [22-year-old] man was forced to swim because he had no travel documents".[405] The GDR state bureaucracy was identified as a reason for the person's decision to swim across a treacherous river and to risk his life as a consequence. The *AP* also quoted Wolfgang Wagner, head of the West German Maltese Aid Service, claiming that other migrants were held "at submachine-gun point [by the Czechoslovak border guards] until they pledged they would not head toward the Hungarian border", which the Czechoslovak authorities denied.[406] Such emigration

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[401] Patrick Major, *Behind the Berlin Wall: East Germany and the Frontiers of Power*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010, 255.
[402] Lorenz M. Lüthi, *Cold Wars: Asia, the Middle East, Europe*. Cambridge, United Kingdom; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2020, 587.; Julia Sonnevend, *Stories without Borders: The Berlin Wall and the Making of a Global Iconic Event*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018, 63.
[403] Rees Jones, "Borders and Walls: Do Barriers Deter Unauthorized Migration?". *Migration Policy Institute*, 5 October 2016, https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/borders-and-walls-do-barriers-deter-unauthorized-migration, (accessed: 10 July 2022).
[404] George Jahn, "Czech and East German Authorities Seizing Refugee Passports". *AP*, 18 September 1989.
[405] Ibid.; "Number of Refugees in Prague's Bonn Mission Approaching 900". *AP*, 25 September 1989.
[406] George Jahn, "East Germans Say Passports Being Confiscated". *AP*, 17 September 1989.; Alex Bandy, "Refugees Crowd West German Embassies in East Bloc; Bonn Closes Warsaw Office". *AP*, 19 September 1989.

attempts were depicted as bravery, the price East Germans were willing to pay for the relative safety of the Hungarian shores, and the legalised hostility of the Czechoslovak authorities towards migrants. These depictions of state borders correspond with Roger Zetter's view that they are part of the discourse of state-regulated national frontiers and the state's utmost efforts in punishing those disobeying the regulations that govern them.[407]

The Czechoslovak decision to allow East Germans to cross to the FRG directly via the Czechoslovak-FRG border on the 3rd of November 1989 in order to halt their arrival at the Czechoslovak capital marked a significant step towards drastically reducing instances of border violence East Germans were subjected to.[408] This shift also depicted the Czechoslovak communist leadership as reforming its system as a compromise because they could not control this migration. According to *AP*'s Nesha Starcevic, it was the first direct route to "the West since the Berlin Wall was built in August 1961".[409] At least 23,000 East Germans reached the FRG in the first three days of its opening.[410] They were pictured putting up two fingers in a "V for victory" sign (Fig. 4-8).[411] Arriving to the FRG

Figure 4-8: "East Germans arrived in Giessen, West Germany, on three special trains from Prague. A fourth train was scheduled to arrive sometime today."
AP

In: Manfred Hees, "West German Embassy Close to Overflowing; More Refugees Expected". *AP*, 3 November 1989.

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[407] Roger Zetter, "More Labels, Fewer Refugees: Remaking the Refugee Label in an Era of Globalization". *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 20(2), 2007, 172-192, http://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fem011, (accessed: 14 March 2022), 181.
[408] G. C. Steichen, "Krenz Promises Freer Travel to West, but Will Keep Berlin Wall". *AP*, 25 October 1989.; G. C. Steichen, "Gov't Amnesty for Escapees, Demonstrators; Lifts Travel Rule". *AP*, 27 October 1989: modest changes of the travel system since hard currency was still required, difficult to obtain, and limited.
[409] Nesha Starcevic, "Half-Million March in Leipzig; East Germany Says 23,200 Went West". AP, 6 November 1989.
[410] Ibid.
[411] Manfred Hees, "West German Embassy Close to Overflowing; More Refugees Expected". *AP*, 3 November 1989.; John Tagliabue, "In Czech Border Town, Another Day of Rush Hour". *The New York Times*, 7 November 1989, a14.

via the Pomezí nad Ohří border crossing, they passed by the *AP* photojournalist's right-hand side, shown here tired, smiling, and cheerful – victorious. A couple of East Berliners also spoke of the nicest Czechoslovak border police behaviour they had ever experienced, claiming they were "waved through with a friendly '*Auf Wiedersehen"*" at the border crossing.[412] These depictions underscored migrants' agency – the state as a hegemonic creator of their legal identities and narrated belonging as "citizens of the GDR" gave into their demand for freedom of movement.

The opening of the Czechoslovak-FRG route from the GDR shifted the migrants' own attitudes towards their state. Allison Smale interviewed an East German from Erfurt at Prague's FRG Embassy. Upon the announcement that they were allowed to go west directly from Czechoslovakia, one man claimed that he intended to "go back and keep demonstrating" and clenched a fist in the air, followed by the slogan "Wir sind das Volk" ("We are the people"), thus "echoing the chant of tens of thousands in recent weeks" in the GDR streets and squares.[413] The interviewee and others had claimed, as Smale reported, that "it is hard for Westerners to imagine the privations they have endured and the contempt many now feel for their government and for the very word 'socialism'."[414] This remark highlighted the difference in lifestyles and mentalities of people in a capitalist and socialist society. The *AP* representations of migrants also depicted them as proudly aligning themselves with the anti-regime protest movement as well and changing their minds about emigrating – they were hopeful for the possibility of a different life in East Germany.[415] Just as protesters became migrants after the Dresden train station incident, so did migrants become protesters; this shift tied these two, often juxtaposed groups of people, together. Yet while the final positive experiences at the Czechoslovak borders pleasantly surprised East Germans travelling to the FRG, those crossing the GDR-Polish frontiers could not rely on being granted similar treatment in Poland.

4. 3. 2. Taking chances at the Polish borders

Despite the *AP* reporters' portrayal of the Czechoslovak officials as merciless bureaucrats, the notion of "impermeable" borders and their warranted defence was

[412] Kevin Costelloe, "Thousands Arrive in West Germany After Door to Freedom Opens". *AP*, 4 November 1989.; Manfred Hees, "Refugees Converge on West German Embassy Despite Open Border". *AP*, 4 November 1989.
[413] Allison Smale, "Why So Far, So Fast in East Germany?". *AP*, 9 November 1989.
[414] Ibid.
[415] Allison Smale, "Young Families Pouring Over Border Into West". *AP*, 5 November 1989.

stronger in Poland. In the new Polish government of 1989, the border regime fell under the Ministry of Interior's control, itself subordinate to the Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR) minister Czesław Kiszczak, who was also among those responsible for the imposition of a martial law in Poland in 1981. The PZPR considered its socialist obligations to the GDR as overriding international ones, while "Solidarność" and independent members of government, such as the Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki and the Foreign Minister Krzysztof Skubiszewski, found themselves in a bind of commitments to human rights and dependence on FRG financial aid in order to save Poland's collapsing economy. Dispelling any possibilities of stark governmental shifts in Poland towards western style democracy which upholds international human rights regimes, *AP*'s R. Barb quoted *The Scotsman* when she aptly put it – "democratic the [Polish] government might be… but the Communist Party still provides the bureaucracy that oils the state as well as the local government machines."[416] The *AP* reports on the Polish border East Germans crossed generally revealed the new government's shaky human rights commitments, a situation comparable to Hungary's summer of 1989 as it wrestled with the idea of opening borders to East Germans and defying the agreements with their government.[417]

The *AP* represented the Polish border crossings as fortuitous for East Germans – if they were spotted by the Polish border guards swimming across the border with the GDR and had no GDR-issued travel documents, they would be deported back to East Germany.[418] Daniel Menaker reported that the Polish "border guards had turned back a few East Germans before they reached Poland", reportedly 407 people, because their crossing attempt was perceived as "illegal" by the Polish United Workers' Party members overseeing the border security.[419] Even those East Germans who had personal identification documents for Poland risked their lives to reach the country. John Daniszewski interviewed a 27-year-old woman who received help from the International, West German, and Polish Red Cross workers after reportedly swimming across the river

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[416] R. Barb, "Western Media Fronts Polish Story, East Bloc More Restrained". *AP*, 19 August 1989.
[417] Ibid.
[418] Carol J. Williams, "Embassies Jammed with 3,200 Refugees; Bonn Seeks Easing of Situation". *AP*, 29 September 1989: "Genscher's spokesman, Juergen Chrobog, said Skubiszewski promised Genscher no East Germans would be returned home against their will".
[419] Daniel Menaker, "More Arrive, Some Wet from Swimming River Border". *AP*, 4 October 1989.; G. Boehmer, "New Refugees Roll into the West on Possibly the Last Freedom Train". *AP*, 6 October 1989.; Carol J. Williams, "Embassies Jammed with 3,200 Refugees; Bonn Seeks Easing of Situation". *AP*, 29 September 1989.; John Daniszewski, "From Mazowiecki Government, Contradictory Statements on Refugees". *AP*, 12 October 1989.

Oder without "any baggage, no underwear or socks. Not even shoes. All I have are my papers."[420] This depiction of people arriving in Poland from East Germany demonstrated that they were so worried about the legality of their emigration that they disregarded their own health and wellbeing during that migration process. If they did not drown in the Oder, they were caught by the East German or Polish border guards who determined their fates instead. The woman Daniszewski interviewed was, however, among those lucky to have made it to Poland. She enjoyed a more welcoming environment there in comparison to Czechoslovakia, as the chapter of this thesis on the Polish press discusses in greater detail.[421] What type of migration narratives did the AP journalists weave with these representations of East Germans, their migration spaces, places, and borders?

4. 4. Migration narratives in the English language press

The *Associated Press* covered the 1989 East German migration via Prague and Warsaw to English-speaking audiences around the world by balancing reports on official diplomacy and personal human-interest stories about migrants. A comparison of a hospitable Warsaw and hostile Prague was quickly established in the *AP* reporting as a core schema that represented the Cold War world order – one was depicted as beginning its journey to the capitalist liberal order and another as stuck in the socialist dogmas of the past. While both the Polish and Czechoslovak authorities were represented as initially hostile to the migrants, the Polish semi-democratic government eventually chose to welcome them and negotiate on their behalf with both German governments regarding their passage west. The Czechoslovak communist leadership, however, was forced to do so in order to prevent them from coming to the country's capital and discrediting the socialist order in East Germany. Both Polish and Czechoslovak authorities had a similar attitude to their state borders as unalterable and sacred: ideological dogmatism ruled over the Czechoslovak interpretations of the state frontier as threatened by this migration and historical nationalist narratives pushed the Polish authorities to defend them as well. Yet the Poles compromised the most myth-laden narratives and enabled East Germans to fly over their borders to West Germany and the Czechoslovaks were forced to allow the migrants through to West Germany as well. Two clashing narratives dominated the East

[420] John Daniszewski, "Refugees in Poland Join Exodus to West". *AP*, 5 October 1989.; Williams, "Embassies Jammed with 3,200 Refugees; Bonn Seeks Easing of Situation": "An embassy official brought a carload of blankets."; Manfred Hees, "East German Tells Refugees They Can Emigrate if They Return Home". *AP*, 26 September 1989; George Jahn, "East Germans Say Passports Being Confiscated". *AP*, 17 September 1989.
[421] David Nelson, "Refugees Raise Question of German Reunification". *AP*, 8 October 1989.

German migration coverage in the *AP*. One of them represented the migration as leading towards the reunification of Germany and depicted the migrants as "anti-GDR propaganda tools" through quoted state-socialist press or politicians' views, published in the *AP*. Another one posited their migration as a resistance movement and the migrants as heroes and freedom fighters who aimed to bring down a dictatorship. The first narrative was decisively state-centred in its expressed concerns for national sovereignty, and the second one was migrant-centric, individualistic, and also triumphalist. Most of the *AP* reports narrated this migration from a humanitarian perspective and depicted it as a collective action, thus simplifying the process and its multitude of inspirations.

4. 4. 1. Reunification: migrants as threat

The "reunification" narrative in the *AP* was especially prominent at the beginning of the East German migration west via Warsaw. The *AP* reported on "arch-conservative" and "ultraright" sentiments in Poland, which Terrence Petty claimed to be "at least partly attributed to an increasing wave of refugees".[422] In July 1989, the *AP* reprinted claims made by Theo Waigel, the FRG Finance Minister, who contended that "the German Reich in its border of 1937 did not cease to exist with the German army's 1945 capitulation to the Allies."[423] In this way, the East German emigration was related to rising right-wing sentiments not only in Poland but also in West Germany, a connection which defined East German migrants as easy scapegoats for the problems which were not solved after the Second World War. As Tony Judt argued later, "that history never went away" and "the long shadow" of the war not only moulded the post-war order but also continued to be relevant after the end of the Cold War.[424] That also means that historic claims relating to it remained relevant in Europe, especially when a "crisis", like the mass East German emigration west, was on the agenda. According to *AP*'s Carol J. Williams, the Czechoslovak communist party also perceived the potential "reunification as a drive powered by a vengeful spirit on the part of the Germans to reclaim territory lost in World War II" (Fig. 4-9).[425] This was used as the main argument for the narrative that fused

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[422] Terence Petty, "Walesa Wants No More West German Talk About Polish Borders". *AP*, 7 September 1989.
[423] "Poles Express Anger at West German's Remarks on Border". *AP*, 7 July 1989.; Carol J. Williams, "Reunification Talks Stirs Jitters Among German Neighbors". *AP*, 3 November 1989.; David Nelson, "Refugees Raise Question of German Reunification". *AP*, 8 October 1989.
[424] Tony Judt, *Postwar: a History of Europe since 1945*, New York: Penguin Press, 2005, 10.
[425] Williams, "Reunification Talks Stirs Jitters Among German Neighbors". *AP*, 3 November 1989.; Shigeki Sato, "Territorial Disputes and National Identity in Post-war Germany: the Oder–Neisse Line in Public Discourse". *European Journal of Cultural and Political Sociology*, 1(2), 2014, https://doi.org/10.1080/23254823.2014.957224, 158-179, (accessed: 21 Nov 2021), 158-159.

Figure 4-9: "Pre-World War II Europe, Post-World War II Europe".
The Washington Post

In: Jackson Diehl, "East Europeans Return to Roots". *The Washington Post*, 12 November 1989, a1.; "East Europe Recaptures Its History", a26.

emigration with the discursive tropes of threat and danger, claiming an allegedly familiar development was underway that would define the European future. Kristina Spohr later also wrote that this migration had reintroduced historical fears into the Polish national narrative based on familiar depictions of Germans and German plans as evil and vindictive, on a warpath with the peace-loving European nations.[426] Whether those fears were indeed reintroduced, or never left the social consciousness of the nation, is debatable, but it certainly added a conservative layer on the seemingly liberal and democratic Polish opposition. Reportedly, Lech Wałęsa maintained that the 1989 East German migration was a "problem" which triggered "intolerance and provoke[d] nationalistic feelings" in the country.[427] Following Judt's statement, it could be argued that the intolerance and nationalistic feelings directed against any perceived threatening German action in the region were more historic than Wałęsa claimed. The migrants, then, otherwise personally unfamiliar to the Poles, were conveniently represented as a familiar

[426] John Daniszewski, "Democracy – It's Breaking Out in Eastern Europe". *AP*, 2 June 1989.; Spohr, *Post Wall, Post Square*, 127.
[427] Terrence Petty, "Walesa Wants No More West German Talk About Polish Borders". *AP*, 7 September 1989.

historical threat, weaponised by West German far-right revanchists against the GDR in order to take back its former territories, which threatened Polish sovereignty.[428] To what extent were they a threat and not a scapegoat for the historical trauma experienced and uncompensated?

This framing of the migration related to the Nazi past and selected Polish experiences of the Second World War regarding its western borders and borderlands.[429] Poland could have lost a third of its area in the event of expansionist and territorially-aggressive German reunification, including cities such as Wrocław and Szczecin, as well as the Silesian industrial region, which would have hampered its economic recovery during the democratic transition period and hurt its nationalist pride.[430] As the new Polish leadership saw it, "resistance remain[ed] strong in Poland" "to a militarily and economically strong Germany rising again on the western border" and the East German migration was bringing it closer to reality.[431] This narrative relied on the historic Polish fears over a repetition of the past which portrayed the Polish government as justified in its claims on the "inviolability of the border" and initial hostility towards the East German migration over its territory.[432] Arguments against this migration changed with time, however, and this narrative was only dominant at the beginning of the East German migration via Prague and Warsaw. It gave way to an interpretation of the East German migration as a resistance movement against communist dictatorships, which showed how political migration issues were in 1989 and remain so today.

4. 4. 2. Resistance: migrants as heroes

Most of the *AP* reporting on the 1989 East German migration framed this process as a sign of dissent against the dictatorial rule of the East German communist party. Jonathan Bolton criticised common applications of the terms "dissent" and "dissident" as applied to people and movements viewed as oppositional ruling communist regimes during the

[428] The so-called Polish "Reclaimed territories".
[429] Carol J. Williams, "Bonn Hopes to Stem Immigrant Tide by Aiding Old Foe". *AP*, 31 July 1989.
[430] Terrence Petty, "Walesa Wants No More West German Talk About Polish Borders". *AP*, 7 September 1989.
[431] Carol J. Williams, "Reunification Talks Stirs Jitters Among German Neighbors". *AP*, 3 November 1989.
[432] Carol J. Williams, "West German Leader Says His Nation Has No Claims to Polish Land". *AP*, 22 October 1989.; Carol J. Williams, "Journey for Reconciliation With Poland Gets Off on Wrong Foot". *AP*, 7 November 1989.; Seward, D. G., "Kohl-Mazowiecki Talks Focus on Border Issues". *AP*, 9 November 1989.; Carol J. Williams, "Bonn Hopes to Stem Immigrant Tide by Aiding Old Foe". *AP*, 31 July 1989.

Cold War.[433] As he maintained, many western commentators spoke of "the dissidents" of the state-socialist regimes as if they "knew who they were, and indeed, as if *they* ["the dissidents"] knew who they were." [434] Bolton contended that these terms often romanticised and idealised people as a "homogenous group" of "freedom fighters" with "little recognition of different vectors inside dissent", such as profession, class, religion, regional disparities, or ideological leanings on the left or the right.[435] According to him, their use and meaning also had implications for the perceptions of communism "as the devil or a petty demon, a system of boundless evil or one of shabby corruption and futility". [436] Following Václav Havel's understanding of the term, Bolton held that "dissent thus covers a small subset of the social activities that preserve independence, freedom, and creativity" – people who participated in such activities were diverse individuals who questioned the established norms of a socialist order.[437] Similarly, in the case of this analysis of the East German migration coverage in the selected press, "dissent" is understood in this thesis as a subversion and rejection of "authoritative discourse", to borrow Michal Pullmann's term. It was an enactment of alternative ways of being in the prescribed political and ideological order as well as other ways of naming and labelling the social reality than the official prescription directed.[438] These subversions consisted of textual and visual challenges of official proclamations which supported pluralism of views, diversity of identity representations, and critical questioning of existing migration narratives.

The *AP* reports often employed the idealised version of the term "dissent" and represented the migrants as heroes who rose up against their communist authorities and emigrated due to political reasons. Emigrants were perceived as criticising their GDR authorities by "voting with their feet" and "exiting" the state, which strengthened and reinforced those who stayed and "voiced" their dissatisfaction at home in the GDR.[439] Yet as Patrick Major claimed, and the analysis of the AP reports about this migration found, the division between the two movements was not as clear as theoretical models

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[433] Jonathan Bolton, *Worlds of Dissent: Charter 77, the Plastic People of the Universe, and Czech Culture Under Communism*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014, 3.
[434] Ibid.
[435] Ibid., 23.
[436] Ibid., 23-24.
[437] Ibid., 225.
[438] Michal Pullmann, *Konec experimentu: přestavba a pád komunismu v Československu*. Praha: Scriptorium, 2011, 19.
[439] Oldřich Tůma, "9:00, Praha-Libeň, horní nádraží: exodus východních němců přes prahu v září 1989". *Soudobé dějiny*, 6 (2/3), 1999, 147-164, http://www.usd.cas.cz/casopis/soudobe-dejiny-2-3-1999/, (accessed: 8 April 2019), 148.

put it.[440] During the 1989 East German migration, "exit" and "voice" were two intertwining forms of action and rebellion against the GDR state as emigrants became protesters and protesters emigrated.[441] To borrow Mark E. Warren's words, the *AP* did not portray emigration as "an undesirable alternative" to democratisation, reforms, and change in the GDR political system but rather as an unstoppable individual force to act that turned into a collective movement. It was both celebrated and approached with caution for its unpredictable consequences.

The narrative's heroes – the East German migrants – were determined, brave, and systemically neglected, especially in the backdrop of the reports on the Prague West German migration place in Czechoslovakia.[442] They criticised the Czechoslovak and East German governments by reporting on the continued "frustration" of East Germans regarding "emigrating through official channels", which countered the claims made by the GDR authorities that travel from the state had been made easier.[443] Interviews with migrants supported this criticism and the *AP* reporters gave ample space for them to express it in their own words.[444] Textual and visual representations of police violence highlighted the repression migrants faced at the hands of the communist authorities, which was used to demonise the latter and pity the former.[445] Vivid visual portrayals of hostility drowned textual witness testimonies noting leniency of the Czechoslovak police officers around the East German migration place at the Embassy compound. As powerful images of confrontation, they emphasised East Germans' perseverance and bravery to move forward. Much discussed poor weather conditions in autumn in Czechoslovakia also helped to stress the representations of East Germans in Prague as mistreated individuals.[446] A general identity marker for East German migrants in the *AP* as "refugees" gained the popular meaning of people terrorised by state authorities that limit

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[440] Patrick Major, *Behind the Berlin Wall: East Germany and the Frontiers of Power*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010, 221.
[441] Nesha Starcevic, "Refugee Train Arrives; More East Germans Try to Board in Dresden". *AP*, 5 October 1989.; Allison Smale, "Young Families Pouring Over Border into West". *AP*, 5 November 1989.; Deborah G. Seward, "East Germans Wait to Travel West, Others Escape". *AP*, 15 October 1989: "My protest is to leave"; Terrence Petty, "Refugees Doubt Prospects for Real Improvement in East Germany". *AP*, 4 November 1989.; Allison Smale, "Why So Far, So Fast in East Germany?". *AP*, 9 November 1989.
[442] Carol J. Williams, "Bonn Urges East Germans to Leave Embassies in East". *AP*, 9 August 1989.
[443] Ibid.
[444] G. C. Steichen, "Why East Germans Want to Flee Their Country". *AP*, 17 September 1989.; Manfred Hees, "East German Tells Refugees They Can Emigrate if They Return Home". *AP*, 26 September 1989.
[445] Manfred Hees, "East Germany Lets Holdouts Go West but Clamps Down on Further Travel". *AP*, 3 October 1989.
[446] "More Than 300 East Germans Flood Prague Mission". *AP*, 5 September 1989.; Manfred Hees, "Scenes of Hope and Anxiety at West German Embassy". *AP*, 7 October 1989.

their freedoms and rights and force them to leave their home states. While their visual representation sometimes betrayed the inability to imagine migrating individuals as themselves and as their readers, photographed large groups of migrating individuals signalled the *AP* reporters' positive framing of the migrants because they commented on their power and strength, and depicted this migration as a collective movement of like-minded individuals. These representations positioned the migrants as inspiring and familiar to those who were also eager to resist corrupt communist leadership and fight for freedom and democracy.

The *AP* depictions of the Warsaw route for the East German emigration provided the readers with a view of a conflicted new Polish government. On the one hand, it was praised for making efforts towards democratic transition, while on the other, it was criticised for the lack of progress and adherence to old communist commitments, particularly regarding its border policies.[447] The vast majority of the *AP* reports highlighted the welcoming nature of the Polish people towards the migrants, which stood in contrast to the *AP* coverage of the Prague population.[448] The *AP* journalists evoked historical narratives and parallels to report on the encounters between local Poles and East Germans, claiming emigrations of 1981 and 1989 were similar. Familiar experiences tied both groups of people because they involved sacrifices and loss of dignity as well as strife for freedom from dictatorship and personal agency in achieving it.[449] East Germans were also depicted as appreciative of the local hospitality they enjoyed in Poland, both from the authorities and the residents.[450] Interviewed East Germans also expressed regret that they had to emigrate, while others happily abandoned their GDR citizenships at the East German Embassies in Warsaw and, later, in Prague.[451] The attitudes and perceptions held about and by East Germans regarding their migration were as varied as the migrants themselves.

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[447] Deborah G. Seward, "East Germans in Warsaw Embassy Hoping to Go West". *AP*, 14 September 1989.; John Daniszewski, "Refugees in Poland Join Exodus to West". *AP*, 5 October 1989.; John Daniszewski, "More East Germans Flock to Warsaw Embassy After Train for West Leaves". *AP*, 1 October 1989.
[448] Carol J. Williams, "125 East German Refugees Fly from Warsaw to West Germany". *AP*, 17 October 1989.; Deborah G. Seward, "East Germans Get Exit Permits to Go West". *AP*, 16 October 1989.
[449] "East German Refugees' Cars Going for Bargain Prices". *AP*, 5 October 1989.
[450] John Daniszewski, "East Berlin Allows More in Poland to Emigrate". *AP*, 14 October 1989.; Nadia Rybarová, "East Germans Stream to West German Embassy in Prague". *AP*, 2 November 1989.
[451] Terrence Petty, "Refugees Doubt Prospects for Real Improvement in East Germany". *AP*, 4 November 1989.

Although the *AP* news agency's reporters were stationed in Prague and Warsaw, the transnational political discourse of this migration was not limited to western news agencies, themselves depending on the Czechoslovak and Polish press reports. How did the press in Czechoslovakia and Poland depict this migration? To what extent did the *AP* representations and migration narratives echoed over the other side of "the Iron Curtain"?

5. CZECHOSLOVAK PRESS

This chapter explores the Czech language representations of the East German migrants' identities as constructed with the help of the depictions of their migration spaces (East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, West Germany), migration places (FRG diplomatic missions in Prague and Warsaw), and the state borders East Germans had to cross on their way to the FRG. 145 Czech language news reports found in *Lidová Demokracie* (*LD*), *Svobodné Slovo* (*Slovo*), and *Mladá Fronta* (*MF*) were translated, analysed, and thematically coded.[452] With the exception of *Mladá Fronta*, which was the newspaper of the Socialist Union of Youth (Socialistický svaz mládeže, SSM), the selected newspapers were the dailies of marginal but relevant political parties in Czechoslovakia: *Lidová Demokracie* represented the views of the Czechoslovak People's Party (Československá Strana Lidová, ČSL) and *Svobodné Slovo* represented the Czechoslovak Socialist party (Československá Strana Socialistická, ČSS). This chapter demonstrates that the Czechoslovak Communist Party's "authoritative discourse" that prescribed particular ideological depictions of this migration and East German identities in selected newspapers was often subverted as the migration progressed.[453] Although hidden by a thick layer of dogmatic phrases and mental constructions, the selected newspapers of the marginal Czechoslovak political bodies demonstrated diversity in their reporting practices and representations related to the East German migrant identities and their migration stories.

5. 1. "Normalisation" in Czechoslovakia

Much of the cultural and political context of the late 1980s in Czechoslovakia stems from the legacy of the 1968 Prague Spring and a period known as "normalisation" that followed the socialist reformists' violently suppressed attempts to liberalise its political regime. They were crushed as much by the Warsaw Pact invasion as by those Party functionaries who came after their reform-minded colleagues in the country's government. Paulina Bren defined those who still ruled over the state in 1989 as "communism's survivors, the very men who had managed to avoid or otherwise overcome the treason trials, purges,

[452] Unless stated otherwise, all primary and secondary sources in Czech language were translated by the author of this thesis.
[453] Michal Pullmann, *Konec experimentu: přestavba a pád komunismu v Československu.* Praha: Scriptorium, 2011, 19.

arrests, reforms, and counter-reforms of the past twenty years" – and this time they were the ones in charge of how the Czechoslovak state-socialist regime functioned.[454] Bren contended that although the term "normalisation" was not clearly defined by the post-1968 Czechoslovak Communist Party elites, it was clearly not a time of upheavals or an opportunity to rethink communism, as Gorbachev's *perestroika* and *glasnost* would call for from 1986 onwards. According to Jonathan Bolton, Gustáv Husák's, the First Secretary of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia from 1969 to 1987, conceptualisation of "normalisation" endured as "a vision of society in which citizens traded any meaningful public or political life in exchange for relative economic well-being."[455] Michal Pullmann argued that the aim of the practices of the time "was to ensure that the plurality of day-to-day strategies and changes in people's demands and interests would have destabilizing effects" in the personal lives of those disagreeing with the "authoritative", one-voice Party discourse.[456] Pullman claimed that by 1989, however, the partial adoption of *perestroika* in Czechoslovakia in the form of an economic *přestavba*, although resisted by the Party elites, had "opened up critical questions about communist ideology and challenged its stabilizing function."[457] The 1989 East German migration could be considered as a news topic which added to such challenges to the official rhetoric practices of the Czechoslovak communist "normalisation" press.

At least in appearances, the form of this "authoritative discourse" was traceable in the employed positioning and authorship practices of the East German migration reporting in 1989. Information found in those reports was presented as objective views of a collective rather than a personal interpretation of individuals, which evoked rhetorical unity of the communist youth organisations in *Mladá Fronta* (*MF*), socially conservative Christian democrats in *Lidová Demokracie* (*LD*), or democratic socialists in *Svobodné Slovo* (*Slovo*). All selected newspapers focused on how this migration developed in Czechoslovakia and afforded minimal mentions of the situation in Poland. Although it was happening at the heart of the country, the news reports about this migration could most often be found in the "Foreign News" sections of the Czechoslovak newspapers. This practice could be interpreted as an attempted distancing of this topic from the

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[454] Paulina Bren, *The Greengrocer and His TV: The Culture of Communism after the 1968 Prague Spring*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2010, 5.
[455] Jonathan Bolton, *Worlds of Dissent: Charter 77, the Plastic People of the Universe, and Czech culture under Communism.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014, 73.
[456] Pullmann, *Konec experimentu*, 231.
[457] Ibid.

Czechoslovak public discourse as well as downplaying its significance.[458] Migration stories reached the front pages on a few major occasions, such as the decision regarding the East Germans' departure to the Federal Republic of Germany on the 30th of September 1989. Although the KSČ rhetoric manifested among other marginal political parties of Czechoslovakia over political matters, the "authoritative discourse" of the Czechoslovak Communist Party was weakening in their newspapers. The imposed preferred views and interpretations of social realities in the state were changing as well, albeit more reluctantly than in Warsaw.

5. 2. Migration places

The FRG diplomatic missions or migration places are conceptualised here as extraterritorial diplomatic extensions of the West German state in Czechoslovakia or Poland as well as sanctuaries and temporary homes for East Germans. According to Courtney J. Campbell who reflected on the cultural geography work of Phil Hubbard, "place emerges as a particular form of space, one that is created through acts of naming as well as through the distinctive activities and imaginings associated with particular social spaces."[459] By offering specific portrayals of the FRG diplomatic missions in Prague and Warsaw as the East German migration places, *Slovo*, *LD* and *MF* news reports contextualised the representations of East Germans for their readers and also commented on the political spaces they transited through and aimed to reach. Therefore, it is crucial to pay close attention to the ways the FRG Embassies in Prague and Warsaw were represented as it helps to interpret the East German migrants' social environment and representations of identities in the Czechoslovak press of 1989.

5. 2. 1. Chaos and order in Prague

The FRG Embassy in Prague in *Svobodné Slovo* was represented as a place where the East German migrants could be observed. A group of them were photographed through a fence and trees, as if it was visual evidence in a file of the Czechoslovak state security surveillance operation. The shrubbery functioned as an imperfectly sealing barrier

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[458] Similar finding to a previous case study of the official Czechoslovak Communist Party newspaper in: Beatrice Michalovska, *'The Prague Exit': Representations of East German Migration in the Official Press of the Czechoslovak Communist Party in 1989*, [MPhil. Glasgow: University of Glasgow, 2017], http://theses.gla.ac.uk/30736/, (accessed: 24 Nov 2021), 51.

[459] Courtney J. Campbell, "Space, Place and Scale: Human Geography and Spatial History in *Past and Present*". *Past and Present*, 239, 2018, e23-e45, http://doi.org/10.1093/pastj/gtw006, (accessed: 3 June 2021), e26.

between the West German diplomatic representation territory and the rest of Czechoslovakia.[460] Titled "Difficult situation", a *Slovo's* article from the 29th of September by reporters under the alias of Jaš and Hb provided the first visual glimpse into the lives of East Germans in Prague (Fig. 5-1). A caption-less photograph depicted a woman and three men, only one of them looking in the direction of but not at the photographer M. Rasocha. The news report this photograph accompanied spoke of a "difficult situation in the Embassy's garden, […] where citizens of the GDR had to stay even during cold and rainy weather due to their accommodation in tents".[461] This description and the visual representation of the Embassy territory and East Germans there contradicted each other because the photograph did not reflect the "difficult situation" nor it was possible to discern the signs of the "cold and rainy weather", as the report claimed. Although the migrants were typically identified there as "citizens of the GDR" (*občané NRD*) in legal terms adopted in official GDR and Czechoslovak communist party press, the *Slovo* report spoke of "humanitarian" aid, provided by the Czechoslovak Red Cross which cooperated with the FRG Red Cross, in the form of "necessary medical help" and "security". *Slovo's* journalists offered a sympathetic textual representation of the migration situation at the FRG diplomatic mission which was identified as "difficult" for the migrants due to the bad weather and their stay outdoors, while it was illustrated with the help of a visual scene from the compound which did not conform to the description that was provided and alluded to secrecy and surveillance.

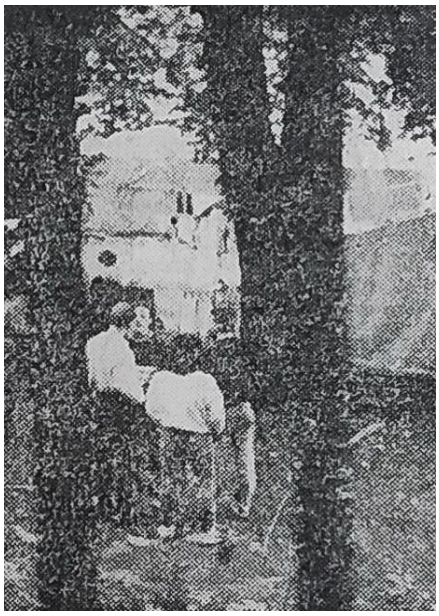

Figure 5-1: Photograph by M. Rasocha.

In: Jaš+hb, "Složitá situace". *Slovo,* 29 September 1989, Nr. 230, 4.

One of the most important narrative developments of the East German migration reporting in Prague was related to the 30th of September announcement of the FRG Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher at the FRG diplomatic mission in Prague that over 4000 East Germans there were allowed to emigrate to the FRG via the territory of

[460] Jaš+hb, "Složitá situace". *Svobodné Slovo,* 29 September 1989, Nr. 230, 4.
[461] Ibid.

the GDR.[462] This GDR decision was itself represented by the East German and Czechoslovak Communist Parties as a "humanitarian act" and the Czechoslovak press reprinted those statements, thus showing support for it. Described as serving "the interest of small children" at the FRG Embassy by the Czechoslovak press, the term "humanitarianism" indeed appeared appropriate for the decision.[463] It could be seen as an attempt to dress a previously uncompromising dictatorship in benevolence and care for those suffering due to its stance on cross-border travel and emigration. Yet instead of criticising the GDR and Czechoslovak governments for creating the conditions for this suffering, Milan Vodička argued in *MF* that the East German children at the Embassy compound were forced to endure cold autumn nights in Prague because of the whims of their parents who decided for them to emigrate from East Germany "illegally".[464] As if explaining this view, *LD* reporters Mi and Bay moralised that this "cannot be considered responsible behaviour", which depicted the official line of the Czechoslovak communist authorities by calling the moral character of those emigrating into question.[465] Usually symbolising future and innocence, reports on East German migrant children were meant to engage the news readers with arguments against emigration.

In other migration contexts, textual and visual tropes of children may be useful argumentative elements to employ both to denote views for and against migrations. Leen D'Haenens and Willem Joris argued that children pictured in dire surroundings or visualised in settings of tragic incidents may put the migration news "into the spotlight and […] generate more empathy".[466] Similarly, Samuel Parker, Anja Aanheim Naper and Simon Goodman argued that a shocking visual featuring children is capable of single-handedly shifting hostile journalistic and political discourses which tend to surround contemporary migration reporting processes.[467] These representations may acknowledge

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[462] "H.-D. Genscher jednal v Praze". *Lidová Demokracie*, 2 October 1989, Nr. 232, 1.
[463] Ibid., 2; "Rozhodný protest v Bonnu". *LD*, 2 October 1989, Nr. 232, 2.
[464] Milan Vodička, "Plná, pak prázdná ambasáda". *Mladá Fronta*, 4 October 1989, Nr. 234, 5.; "Rozhodnutí vlády NDR". *MF*, 5 October 1989, Nr. 235, 5.
[465] Mi+Bay, "Řešení situace na velvyslanectví NSR". *LD*, 5 October 1989, Nr. 235, 3.
[466] Leen D'Haenens and Willem Joris, "Images of Immigrants and Refugees in Western Europe: Media Representations, Public Opinion, and Refugees' Experiences", 7-18. In: D'Haenens, L., Joris, W., Heinderyck, F. (eds.) *Images of Immigrants and Refugees in Western Europe. Media Representations, Public Opinion, and Refugees' Experiences*. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2019, 12.
[467] Samuel Parker, Anja Aanheim Naper and Simon Goodman, "How a Photograph of a Drowned Refugee Child Turned a Migrant Crisis into a Refugee Crisis: A Comparative Discourse Analysis". *for(e)dialogue*, 2(1), 2018, 12-28, https://pure.coventry.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/19737614/601_5697_1_PB_1_.pdf, (accessed: 3 Dec 2018), 14, 19.

the precarity of migrants' lives and their abrupt changes during a migration.[468] Yet, regardless of their ideological leanings, readers may be equally compelled to condemn migrant parents for their irresponsible decisions that put children in peril and symbolically deprive a state of its future. Because "children are innocent", the argument goes, they do not deserve to suffer, as Sean Hall's semiotic reflections inform us.[469] In the *MF* and *LD* reporting on "humanitarianism", allowing exit west, and communist authorities' sudden interest in migrants' children, the newspapers openly passed judgement on emigrating East German adults as irresponsible individuals and as failed socialist citizens. Their migration was, thus, deemed as a reckless and selfish act that benefited only individuals but not their dependents or larger communities.

Daniela DeBono argued from the perspective of discourse analysis and semiotics that humanitarianism can be often conceptualised as identical to hospitality but it is more concerned with power than sheer altruism.[470] The notion becomes an empty signifier that can be filled with many different meanings that are far from those inscribed in it at its inception. [471] Calling the decision to allow the migrants to leave to the FRG "humanitarian" could be criticised as disingenuous by the GDR authorities and their colleagues in Prague. If its leaders were truly concerned for the wellbeing of the East German children, as they claimed, they could have allowed the emigration of their parents sooner or ensured suitable living conditions for them in the GDR or Prague, which could have dissuaded them from emigration in the first place. As discussed in the previous chapter, the AP journalists found that East Germans were disappointed to leave their family and friends in the GDR but did not see another option for their lives to continue there due to a variety of reasons. Hence, the communist "humanitarianism" here is instead interpreted as an attempt to save face after the failure to stop the emigration of its citizens and less as a concern for migrant children.

The Czechoslovak press had, in fact, failed to depict the 30th of September decision as made possible directly by the East German government. *Mladá Fronta* offered diverse visual portrayals of the East German migration compared to other selected news outlets

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[468] Ibid.
[469] Sean Hall, *This Means This, This Means That: a User's Guide to Semiotics*. 2nd ed. London: Laurence King Publishing, 2021, 18.
[470] Daniela DeBono, "Plastic Hospitality: The Empty Signifier at the EU's Mediterranean Border". *Migration Studies*, 7(3), 2019, 340-361, https://academic.oup.com/migration/article/7/3/340/5488167, (accessed: 19 May 2022), 340.
[471] Ibid., 344.

despite following established representational tropes. A first-person front-page account in *MF* with two photographs was included in a report, entitled "Carnival in the Lobkowitz garden".[472] *MF* reporter Vondráček claimed that "enormous joy" among "3500 [migrants] from Prague" and "800 from Warsaw" erupted as they were allowed to travel to the FRG via the territory of the GDR (Fig. 5-2). East Germans were represented as celebrating, clapping their hands and dancing, which the journalists described as appearing "to someone else, uninformed, like some kind of festivities".[473] This *MF* depiction was only comparable to the depictions of them found in the *Associated Press* on this occasion. Despite that, the two photographs that accompanied the report partially contradicted the textual representation of the announcement as a "carnival". It showed the event as controlled and orderly. The first one depicted Hans-Dietrich Genscher with other politicians and journalists at the FRG diplomatic mission's balcony as he announced this important development, a breaking news story visually centred on politicians and diplomats. The second one of a father walking past the camera with his son invoked a sense of action amongst East Germans at the Embassy compound as a response to the political proclamations at the Embassy balcony. This connected previous textual depictions of migrant parents with their children, judged as putting them in danger by emigrating, with a visual. Although the *MF* photojournalists offered a unique depiction of the migrants in the Czechoslovak press as individuals rather than a nameless group of people, those captured in the photographs were neither happy nor celebrating. Due to their vertical positioning, it could be argued that the second image

Figure 5-2: Unclear captions. The photograph at the top depicts the Prague FRG diplomatic mission's balcony, where H.-D. Genscher (fourth from the right) stood, surrounded by the Embassy staff and journalists, when he announced that East German were allowed to leave Prague for the FRG.
TELEOBJEKTIV

The second photograph depicts "The first citizens of the GDR" who were leaving to the FRG, assuming from parts of the caption.

In: D. Vondráček, "Karneval v Lobkovické zahradě". *MF*, 2 October 1989, Nr. 232, 1.

[472] D. Vondráček, "Karneval v Lobkovické zahradě". *MF*, 2 October 1989, Nr. 232, 1, 2.
[473] Vondráček, "Karneval v Lobkovické zahradě".

was rhetorically subordinate to the first one – politicians reach an agreement, announce it, and then people follow it. These two photographs encapsulated this migration story and its power relations – an agreement reached by (West German) politicians ended an alleged crisis in an orderly and civil manner.


Občané NDR nastupují do vlaku na nádraží Praha-Libeň. Foto: ČTK — M. Kalina

Figure 5-3: "Citizens of the GDR are boarding the train at the Prague-Libeň train station."
ČTK – M. Kalína

In: Jaš, "Odjezd další skupiny". *Slovo*, 5 October 1989, Nr. 235, 1.

Subsequently, another important representation of this migration in the Czechoslovak press was formed through the tropes of their departures, symbolising an end of migration "crisis" (Fig. 5-3; 5-4; 5-5). The migrants were depicted as typical travellers with bags, rushing to the bus or from a train. The *MF* news reporter Vondráček defined them as "750 passengers without tickets", thus invoking the notion of illegality of their travel. [474] The migrants were shown as "travelling" against the established social and legal norms – people pay for their train tickets and present them before departure. *LD* news reports also claimed East Germans caused an "undesirable", "abnormal" and "unbearable situation" in Prague. [475] After disrupting order, they were leaving – their migration, visually and textually established as a "problem", was going away (depicted similarly in *Slovo* as well). The captions represented the departures of "citizens of the GDR" and their families and children in cropped shots of groups of people who were visually substituting for the "small groups", "hundreds" and "thousands" of people which news reports mentioned. Two *Slovo* reporters Zč and Jaš claimed to have witnessed the departure of the East German "citizens" but quoted statistical information from the "unofficial" and "western news outlets", however, thus undermining "official" "socialist" news

Figure 5-4: "Situation around the West German Embassy as it was caught by our photojournalist this afternoon."
K. Venušová

In: "H.-D. Genscher jednal v Praze". *LD*, 2 October 1989, Nr. 232, 1.

Figure 5-5: "Citizens of the GDR board the bus near the FRG Embassy."
ČTK

In: Čr and Zč, "NAŠLO SE ŘEŠENÍ". *Slovo*, 2 October 1989, Nr. 232, 2.

[474] Vondráček, "Karneval v Lobkovické zahradě".
[475] "Nóta předána velyslanci NSR". *LD*, 4 October 1989, Nr. 234, 1.

sources.[476] As perceived anti-socialist propaganda, and false information by definition, Dina Fainberg claimed that western press was to be avoided and not employed as a source of reliable information by their eastern colleagues.[477] This strategy could be understood as a sign of subversion of the official statistics on this migration, as the Czechoslovak and GDR numbers for emigration were lower than the western ones. It could also be argued that while textual narratives of the East German migration were shifting away from typical conceptualisations of the East German migration in the communist newspapers, the visual depictions remained within conventional norms for documenting migrations.

The overall negative rhetoric about East Germans was fading in the official Czechoslovak press by October 1989.[478] Vodička reported in *MF* that the "refugee drama" (*dramatu uprchlíků*) was "stirring the whole of Europe" in the autumn of 1989, which was the first acknowledgement of the significance of this migration in the analysed Czech language press.[479] With that, even the usual identity representation as "citizens of the GDR" changed into "refugees" (*uprchlíky*), which noted that the official views towards this migration adhered to their previously proclaimed "humanitarianism". *MF*'s reporters were gradually shifting their representations of the migration itself, from "illegal" (*nelegální*) to "unauthorised" (*neoprávněné*).[480] This particular term could be understood through Vicki Squire's definition as "a phenomenon that emerges through the relation between migratory forces and forces that render" people as "illegal" or their migration as "irregular".[481] This term, therefore, unmasks migration management realities: people are made illegal and criminal by those regulating their migrations. Going further, *MF* also demonstrated a discernible visual shift in its East German representations.[482] Milan Vodička's report "The epilogue of the refugee drama" was

[476] Čr and Zč, "NAŠLO SE ŘEŠENÍ". *Slovo*, 2 October 1989, Nr. 232, 1, 2.; Jaš, "Opět asi tisíc lidí". *Slovo*, 3 October 1989, Nr. 233, 1.
[477] Dina Fainberg, Cold War Correspondents: Soviet and American Reporters on the Ideological Frontlines. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2021, 18.
[478] "Rozhodnutí, ale i odpovědnost". MF, 17 October 1989, Nr. 245, 5.
[479] Vodička, M. "Epilog dramatu uprchlíků". MF, 5 October 1989, Nr. 235, 1, 5.
[480] Ibid.; "Dorazili do Hofu". *MF*, 6 October 1989, Nr. 236, 6.
[481] Vicki Squire, "Unauthorised Migration: Beyond Structure/Agency? Acts, Interventions, Effects". *Politics*, 37(3), 2017, 254-272, http://doi.org/10.1177/0263395716679674, (accessed: 8 Aug 2022), 255.
[482] Milan Vodička, "Epilog dramatu uprchlíků". *MF*, 5 October 1989, Nr. 235, 1, 5.

Figure 5-6: "Prague's Libeň train station yesterday evening."
MF – M. Slavík

In: Milan Vodička, "Epilog dramatu uprchlíků". *MF*, 5 October 1989, Nr. 235, 5.

accompanied by two photographs by M. Slavík, positioned side by side (Fig. 5-6). They introduced visualisations of happiness in the East German migrant representations: a woman, looking directly into the camera, was smiling and waving at the photographer from a packed train to West Germany.[483] None of the other visual representations of East Germans in the Czechoslovak press showed them happy or otherwise implied that beyond textual and visual representations of the rush and hurry with which they departed from Prague. While another person, a man, was pictured walking by the camera – a typical depictions of migrants – M. Slavík's depiction of a smiling woman resembled similar portrayals of East Germans in *Associated Press*. It showed a person confronting the watchers with their happiness. As alternative visual representations of East Germans existed throughout the Czechoslovak press, it also began to translate into empathetic textual depictions of East Germans, similar to those found in the *AP*.

Although the majority of the migrants left Prague by the start of October, Czechoslovak journalists could not hide their "chaotic" presence which still lingered in Prague. Their most frequent observations included photographs and discussions of the East German cars. It is important to note that the East German vehicles, such as "Trabants" and "Wartburgs", became the symbols of this migration, which carried

[483] Ibid, 5.

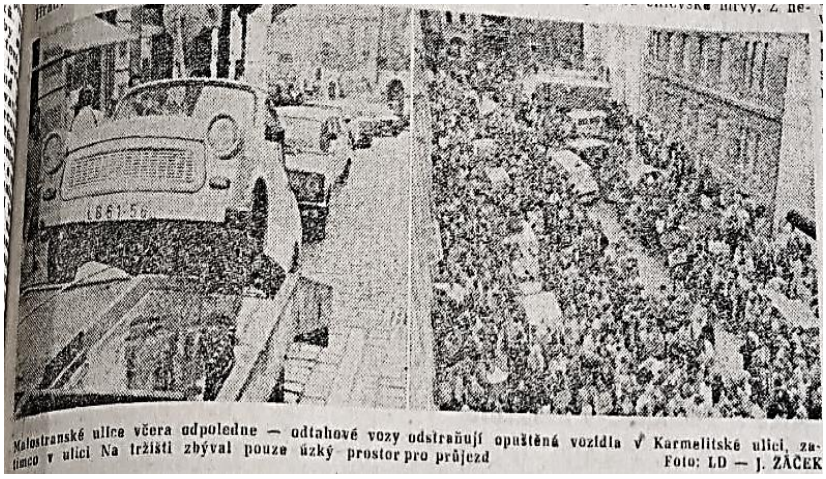

Figure 5-7: "Yesterday afternoon in the streets of Malá Strana - tow trucks remove abandoned vehicles on the Karmelitská street, while only a narrow path remains available to drive through the street Na tržiští." *LD* - J. Žáček

In: Mi+Bay, "Řešení situace na velvyslanectví NSR". *LD*, 5 October 1989, Nr. 235, 3.

different meanings for state-socialist and capitalist press (Fig. 5-7).[484] In the previously discussed *AP* representations, the abandoned "Trabants" were conceptualised in terms of great sacrifices East Germans had to make in order to escape communist oppression in the GDR. Yet the Czechoslovak press employed images of and discussions about the East German vehicles for moralising purposes – to unmask East German migrants as wealthy "economic migrants" interested in financial gain in the FRG. This representation downplayed political reasons of their emigration in favour of an economic explanation for their mass departures from the GDR. It was strengthened textually by referring to cars as litter which also implied the East German carelessness and abandon with which they treated both Prague as guests and their expensive goods as their owners as they left behind for something better in West Germany. *LD* published several such reports and its reporters claimed this "litter", "bearing the licence plate "DDR" (GDR), "clogged normal traffic in the area".[485] *MF*'s Milan Vodička reported "rumours" that a few cars were robbed by local youngsters, "trying to see if the cars were locked" and, as he claimed, it was "an embarrassment for us".[486] *LD*'s journalists reported about "broken windows, destroyed car lights, stolen cassette players", which portrayed residents of Prague in poor light.[487]

[484] "David Černý | QUO VADIS | Walter-Benjamin-Platz | 07.11.2019". ART@Berlin, 5 November 2019, https://www.artatberlin.com/en/david-cerny-berlin-quo-vadis-sculpture-walter-benjamin-platz/, (accessed: 5 October 2021); Mi, "Další transport do NSR". *LD*, 5 October 1989, Nr. 234, 2.
[485] "Nóta předána velvyslanci NSR". *LD*, 4 October 1989, Nr. 234, 1.
[486] Milan Vodička, "Plná, pak prázdná ambasáda". *MF*, 4 October 1989, Nr. 234, 5.
[487] Mi, "Další transport do NSR". *LD*, 5 October 1989, Nr. 234, 2.

While the thefts are not remembered, the very tangible absence of the East Germans was in discussions and visuals Czechoslovak press chose to mark their departures.

Reinforcing the representation of East Germans as agents of disorder and downplaying reports of local instances of vandalism, *MF* journalist Martin Komárek claimed the migrants were responsible for the "sad view" of the city and "sadder still" sight of the FRG Embassy surroundings.[488] One of the most common depictions of the Embassy of the FRG was as a "little tent city", thus conceptualising the living conditions of East Germans as camping.[489] Camping was considered as temporary adventure and exploration of the natural world, a favourite pastime amongst Czechoslovaks, but living in tents for a prolonged time implied destitution and went against established social norms especially in urban settings. Komárek argued that this "unwelcome campground" (*nevítaný kempink*) "lives its weird and worrying life" and it ruined "a scenic walking route in Prague".[490] Given the urban setting of the photographs nearby, *MF* represented the migrants as travellers who refused to settle in the GDR (Fig. 5-8). Two photographs showed groups of young and middle-aged people, sitting and waiting, and a child at the front, playing with a toy car on a bag. Textually, the "campsite" was defined as unsuitable for children who were nevertheless present at these "unsanctioned" "little tent cities", dragged there by their reckless parents. Another notable detail was a car the child in the photograph was playing with. As it was one of the iconic modes of the East German emigration west, it could be implied that the child "toyed" with emigration and an adventure awaiting their family. Representing their migration as a pleasant activity for those engaged in it yet "unwelcome" for those observing it

Figure 5-8: top photograph – people sitting and wating. Bottom photohraph: a child plays with a toy car.

In: Martin Komárek, "Nevítaný kempink". *MF*, 3 October 1989, Nr. 233, 1.

[488] Martin Komárek, "Nevítaný kempink". *MF*, 3 October 1989, Nr. 233, 1: East Germans were not allowed to drive to the FRG personally.
[489] Ibid.; Jaš, "Opět asi tisíc lidí". *Slovo*, 3 October 1989, Nr. 233, 1.; Milan Vodička, "Plná, pak prázdná ambasáda". *MF*, 4 October 1989, Nr. 234, 5.; "Prohlášení mluvčího Čs. vlády". *MF*, 4 October 1989, Nr. 234, 5.; Radka Kváčková, "Na základě respektování". *Slovo*, 4 October 1989, Nr. 234, 4.
[490] Komárek, "Nevítaný kempink".

downplayed the seriousness of the process and depicted it as a problem for those seeing it, rather than those experiencing it. It also rejected the existence of any obstacles that may have prevented East Germans from emigrating directly from Germany to another Germany or which they met in Prague.[491] It also implied that migrants wanted prosperity out of their migration, either financial or spiritual, as their "camping" was not an activity borne out of consternation but out of search for an adventure.

The departure of East Germans from Prague was also, to an extent, lamented. Their presence had become a staple in the city's Malá Strana district over the months they spent there. Appraising their absence, *LD*'s Mi observed that "the traces of the residence of the GDR citizens cannot be eradicated so quickly" as "sweets, a bag with boiled eggs, bottle of lemonade, mouldy baguette, bread…" were also left in the wake of announcements allowing East Germans to depart from the diplomatic mission.[492] Similarly, *LD* also employed poetic descriptions to represent the Embassy grounds:

> "On pavements, on a piece of plastic or cardboard boxes, people are wrapped in covers, dressed in two or more sweaters but still numb from winter cold. […] Cans of beer or lemonade, canned food, paper and food leftovers are there, and among them are backpacks, suitcases, bags and, most importantly, people..." [493]

This extract depicts East German migrants as pitiful individuals surrounded by their disrespectfully abandoned food products and litter, suffering in vain in the cold for uncertain future prospects in West Germany. The ellipsis at the end of the quote expresses incredulity over a scene like this at the Embassy and invites the reader of this report to think and imagine this scene. Despite the potential to depict the migrants through the tropes of consumerism and disorder, East Germans were pitied for having reached such a point in their lives, especially if their emigration west was prohibited to continue.

The fact that the FRG Embassy was at the heart of Prague meant that encounters with East Germans provided opportunities for locals and migrants to learn more about each other and understand this migration, which newspapers such as *Slovo* reported on.[494] According to Alexander Izotov and Jussi Laine's understanding of the concept of (un)familiarity, encounters between people provide opportunities to reshape "old

[491] Radka Kváčková, "Na základě respektování". *Slovo,* 4 October 1989, Nr. 234, 4.
[492] Mi, "Další transport Do NSR". *LD*, 5 October 1989, Nr. 234, 2.
[493] Mi+Bay, "Řešení situace na velvyslanectví NSR". *LD*, 5 October 1989, Nr. 235, 3.
[494] "Zpráva ČTK a ADN". *Slovo,* 4 October 1989, Nr. 234, 4.

understandings [of them, often] based on ideological definitions".[495] Yet as the GDR governmental response to the migration toughened with the October announcement of visa requirements for Czechoslovakia, *Slovo's* visual representations of the process softened as they leaned towards humanitarian depictions of East Germans that criticised the official political stance towards their emigration and challenged previous depictions of the process as carefree camping (Fig. 5-9). Three photographs by K. Venušová depicted people climbing the FRG Embassy wall, lifting a child up into the mission's

Figure 5-9: "When it was not possible to use the entrance, quite a few citizens of the GDR tried to reach the building of the FRG Embassy via the tall wall on the Vlašská street. The second and third photographs depict the situation in front of the Embassy building."
K. Venušová

In: Radka Kváčková, "Na základě respektování". *Slovo,* 4 October 1989, Nr. 234, 4.

compound, a crowd of people in front of the Embassy entrance, and a closer shot of a family with children. Yet instead of writing a story of chaos and disorder at the Embassy like before, *Slovo* journalist Radka Kváčková empathised with the migrants as she observed, matter-of-factly, that it was "very difficult to move babies" over the Embassy fence.[496] Her interview with the nearby hospital manager also revealed that the medical staff there helped East Germans, and locals who shared food with them and allowed them into their homes to use sanitary facilities. Other *Slovo* reporters shared similar observations, and claimed the migrants, or "refugees [who] slept under the stars", "welcomed" "warm tea and snacks […], provided to those numb [with cold] and waiting by a few local Prague residents".[497] *Slovo* also depicted East Germans as climbing over the fence with a ladder while groups of unidentified people were pictured chatting nearby

[495] Alexander Izotov and Jussi Laine, "Constructing (Un)Familiarity: Role of Tourism in Identity and Region Building at the Finnish-Russian Border". *European Planning Studies*, 21(1), 2013, 93-111, https://doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2012.716241, (accessed: 14 July 2021), 107.
[496] Radka Kváčková, "Na základě respektování". *Slovo,* 4 October 1989, Nr. 234, 4.
[497] Ibid.; Jaš, "Odjezd další skupiny". *Slovo*, 5 October 1989, Nr. 235, 1.; "Řešení problému". *Slovo,* 4 October 1989, Nr. 234, 1.

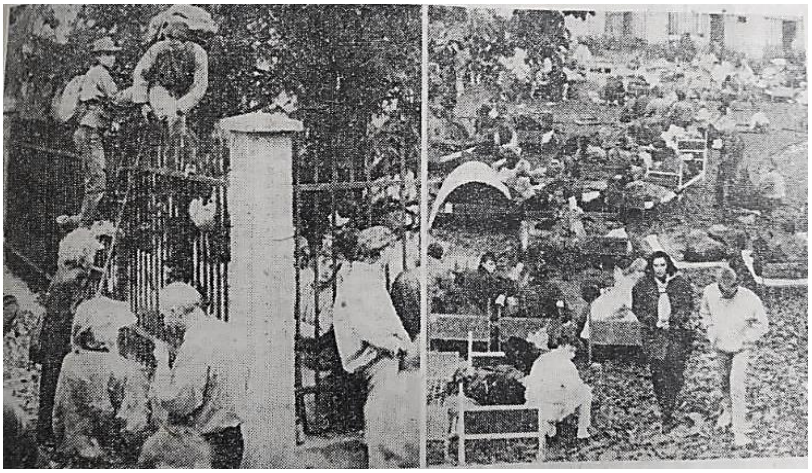

Figure 5-10: "The number of the citizens of the GDR, coming and staying at the FRG Embassy in Prague, has reached 4000. Photographs of ČTK show only a part of their challenging situation as the temperature during the night was only 8° C..."

In: Hb/ Něk, "Noc bez přístreší". *Slovo*, 4 November 1989, Nr. 260, 3.

(Fig. 5-10). Those next to the fence were not pictured as rushing to climb it, so they could have been other migrants, patiently waiting in line, or locals, who lent those eager to hop over a ladder and an ear. This portrayal of the migration and its development around the FRG diplomatic mission contrasted sharply with pictures published in the *AP* of a heavily patrolled and violent encounters of East Germans with the Czechoslovak police officers. As such, East Germans were no longer depicted as a threat for the order in Prague which one shuts their doors to, but as guests and fellow neighbours – a little bit unfamiliar at first but better understood after a hot cup of tea. How did the Czechoslovak journalists represented this migration at Warsaw's FRG Embassy in Poland?

5. 3. The Polish route in the Czechoslovak press

The Czechoslovak press took a minimal interest in the East German migration in Poland. Despite the fact that concerns regarding the safeguarding of Polish borders were related to the anti-migration narrative utilised by Czechoslovak politicians, very few newspapers mentioned how this migration developed at the Polish FRG diplomatic mission or the Polish-East German state borders. In the selected newspapers, only the most significant political decisions relating to it were reported. Early in the summer of 1989, it was decided, as *Slovo* reported, that the FRG diplomatic mission in the Polish capital Warsaw was to be shuttered due to congestion in their facilities, which were smaller than those in Prague. This decision was made out of concern for disruptions similar to those in the Czechoslovak capital.[498] By the 30th of September, around 800 East Germans at the FRG

[498] "Jen krátce…". *Slovo*, 21 September 1989, Nr. 223, 2.

Embassy in Warsaw also benefited from the same decision to travel to the FRG via the GDR as those in Prague, depicted in *LD* as "staying in Warsaw without justification".[499] This initial representation relayed the Czechoslovak authorities' perspective on this migration in the previously observed terms of legality and illegality defined by GDR laws. The East German motivations for emigration were deemed insufficient as "justification" for being in Warsaw's FRG diplomatic mission. This claim discredited individual aspirations and revealed the Czechoslovak ideologically biased mindset towards both this migration and the Polish reaction to it.

Attempting dangerous journeys to Poland was deemed the only prospect left by many East Germans to escape from the GDR. East Germans risked their their lives by swimming across the Oder and Neisse rivers in order to reach Poland from East Germany, and at least 407 people were caught and deported back to the GDR in just over two weeks because such border crossing attempts were classed as "illegal".[500] However, this practice changed by the 13th of October when *Slovo* announced that the new Polish government decided to "not turn any of the refugees back" from its borders.[501] In its reporting on the potential dangers the Polish government might have put those deported back to the GDR through, *Slovo* defined East Germans as "refugees".[502] The news report by Čr and Zč also represented them as "citizens of the GDR" turned "emigrants" (*emigranti*) and their migration as "emigration" (*emigrace*) which implied permanence and a decisive "exit".[503] *LD* reported on the 18th of October that the East German migrants in Warsaw were allowed to renounce their citizenship at the GDR Embassy in Warsaw.[504] *LD* represented them as "the former citizens of the GDR" (*bývalí občané NDR*) but not "emigrants" or "refugees".[505] Consequently, despite the fact that *LD* provided an alternative term for migrants, its reporters largely maintained the legal context of their naming practices. The legal and bureaucratic language to describe them was tightly connected with the multiple border regimes East Germans had to navigate.

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[499] "H.-D. Genscher jednal v Praze". *LD*, 2 October 1989, Nr. 232, 2.; "Jednání o uprchlících". *LD*, 7 October 1989, Nr. 235, 2 .
[500] "Jednání o uprchlících". *LD*, 7 October 1989, Nr. 235, 2: in the period of 18 September to 7 October 1989.
[501] "Prohlášení z Varšavý". *Slovo*, 13 October 1989, Nr. 242, 2.
[502] Čr and Zč, "NAŠLO SE ŘEŠENÍ". *Slovo*, 2 October 1989, Nr. 232, 2.
[503] Ibid.; "Sdělení mluvčího FMV". *Slovo*, 6 October 1989, Nr. 236, 1.; "Svolána konference SED". *Slovo*, 10 November 1989, Nr. 265, 1.; Zč, "Reakce na žádost členů". *Slovo*, 15 November 1989, Nr. 269, 2.
[504] "Bývalí občané NDR odletěli z PLR". *LD*, 18 October 1989, Nr. 246, 2.
[505] Ibid.

5. 4. Borders

State borders were largely defined in the Czechoslovak press as inviolable boundaries of a state's sovereignty over its citizens. However, the meaning of borders changed in the Czechoslovak press. Maria De Fátima Amante, echoing Étienne Balibar's conceptualisations, endorsed the argument regarding their polysemy and argued that "a specific border might be subjected to a myriad of constructions and representations" because its significance may change with time or appear different to different people or in different contexts.[506] Changing notions about the borders East Germans crossed meant that those who crossed them were also becoming less "unfamiliar" in the Czechoslovak press.

Upon the opening of the Hungarian-Austrian border from the 2nd of May 1989, *LD* and *Slovo* published almost identical news reports, which marked unity in an official stance towards this development. They specifically emphasised that the Hungarian border was not "open" to cross freely but the "border guards will still check the documents and protect the inviolability" of the frontier.[507] The notion of protecting the "inviolability" of a state border, established at the very beginning of the East German migration coverage, represented the socialist world as threatened by aggressive capitalist forces – those attracted by its lure deserved to be punished.[508] This stance involved explicit rejections of representations implying permanent emigration of East Germans, defined variously as "emigrants" or "refugees", and depicted them as adventurers instead, or "tourists from the GDR" (*turisté z NRD*).[509] Once it became clear that the GDR residents were not coming back to the GDR out of their own free will, representations in *Slovo* such as "so-called refugees" (*takzvaní uprchlíci*) were employed to explicitly counter arguments for empathetic portrayal and reception of East Germans.[510]

When the Hungarian government officially allowed East Germans to travel to Austria in September, the selected Czechoslovak newspapers took different approaches

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[506] Maria de Fátima Amante, "Recovering the Paradox of the Border: Identity and (Un)familiarity Across the Portuguese–Spanish Border". *European Planning Studies*, 21(1), 2013, 24-41, https://doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2012.716237, (accessed: 16 July 2021), 25.
[507] "Zrušené hraniční pásmo". *LD*, 2 August 1989, Nr. 180, 2.; "Opatření na hranicích". *Slovo*, 3 May 1989, Nr. 103, 2.; "MLR ruší hraniční pásmo". *Slovo*, 2 August 1989, Nr. 180, 2.; "O turistech z NDR v MLR". *Slovo*, 11 August 1989, Nr. 188, 2.
[508] "Smrt na hranici". *Slovo*, 24 August 1989, Nr. 199, 2.; "Nepřijatelné vměšování". *Slovo*, 6 September 1989, Nr. 210, 2.; "Řešení problému". *Slovo*, 4 October 1989, Nr. 234, 1.
[509] "O turistech z NDR v MLR". *Slovo*, 11 August 1989, Nr. 188, 2.; Čr, "NAŠLO SE ŘEŠENÍ". *Slovo*, 2 October 1989, Nr. 232, 1.
[510] "Nepřijatelné vměšování". *Slovo*, 6 September 1989, Nr. 210, 2.

in reacting to the news. *MF* and *LD* re-printed the GDR official announcements and condemned the decision as infringing upon the GDR sovereignty as it breached the 1969 bilateral agreements.[511] Echoing the official KSČ ideological line, the reports accused the "western mass media outlets" of participation in the FRG "rumour campaign" against the GDR and Czechoslovakia.[512] Yet *Slovo*, treading lightly on the subversion of official Czechoslovak rhetoric towards this decision, published the Hungarian government's statement instead, claiming that their decision was justified and irreversible.[513] The Czechoslovak newspapers supported the official attitudes of borders and the need to protect them from East German migrants to varying extent. Depictions of migrants were closely tied to depictions of the Hungarian frontiers at the start of the East German migration reporting and introduced an array of clashing identity representations. How did those representations evolve further when it came to the Czechoslovak borders?

5. 4. 1. The Czechoslovak frontiers

The Czechoslovak press depictions of their own frontiers betrayed them as ideologically constructed and based on notions of the good-self and bad-other representations. When the Czechoslovak authorities were eventually compelled to open their border with the FRG to allow East Germans a direct emigration route, its press depicted the event as a curiosity.[514] *LD* reports claimed that one of the border crossings was particularly overwhelmed with 13,000 East German "visitors" (*návštěvníci*), "tourists", and "curious people" (*zvědaví lidé*) crossing it in three days.[515] Jaroslav Mikeš of *LD* interviewed a member of the Czechoslovak border patrol who stated that many East Germans were incredulous about the open borders between two states, so they decided to cross it as quickly as possible, hence the queues.[516] Many reports from the Czechoslovak-FRG border also depicted the FRG border guards as unprofessional and disorganised in receiving East German "visitors" at their side of the border. *Slovo* reporter Ač represented

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[511] "Prohlášení ADN". *MF*, 12 September 1989, Nr. 215, 5.; "Porušení právních smluv". *MF*, 13 September 1989, Nr. 216, 5.; "Nóta do Budapešti". *LD*, 13 September 1989, Nr, 216, 2.
[512] "K ochraně státních hranic". *LD*, 22 September 1989, Nr. 224, 4.
[513] "Odpověd vlády MLR". *Slovo*, 15 September 1989, Nr. 218, 2.; "K cestám do ČSSR". *Slovo*, 13 October 1989, Nr. 242, 2.; Zč, "Potřeba analýzy příčin". *Slovo*, 13 October 1989, Nr. 242, 2.; "Omezení zrušeno". *Slovo*, 30 October 1989, Nr. 255, 1.
[514] "Situace na velvyslanectví NSR". *LD*, 3 November 1989, Nr. 259, 5.; "O občanech NDR v Praze". *Slovo*, 26 October 1989, Nr. 253, 1.; "Do NSR". MF, 4 November 1989, Nr. 260, 2.; Zč, "Jednala vláda NDR". *Slovo*, 4 November 1989, Nr. 260, 2.; Lav, Nt, Ša, Pří," Na přechodech klidnější". *Slovo*, 6 November 1989, Nr. 261, 1.
[515] "Odjezd občanů". *MF*, 6 November 1989, Nr. 261, 2.; Jaroslav Mikeš, "Najdou svůj nový domov?". *LD*, 18 November 1989, Nr. 272, 1.
[516] Mikeš, "Najdou svůj nový domov?".

the border crossing points at Pomezí, Rozvadov and Folmava as "difficult" due to "traffic jams" the West German border guards could not ease.[517] Such calm and orderly depictions of an extraordinary event in the lives of the migrants as well as in the diplomatic relations between Czechoslovakia and West Germany could be seen as part of the representational strategies of the press. In relation to the opening of the Berlin Wall, for instance, Julia Sonnevend defined the GDR press discourse relating to it as a counter-narration of an event in a "generally factual and objective" way, part of a "deliberate, and continuous reform process" in the form of "new travel regulation".[518] The return of the term "visiting" or "tourist" East German migrants signalled a perception that this migration was not permanent that the border was open but rather a short whimsical trip, part of many in the future now that the authorities liberalised the travel regime between the two countries.[519] The Czechoslovak-FRG border opening was depicted as a proud achievement that was handled professionally by its border guards, contrary to their FRG counterparts. The depiction of the border opening as a temporary measure and expressed disbelief in lasting changes to its functioning also replaced previous dogmatic representations of the state-socialist frontiers as "inviolable". As observed in the news reports, the meaning of borders was controlled by the state authorities who were also responsible for defining those related to them in any way.

Summarising the East German crossings of the Czechoslovak-FRG borders, *Slovo* reported that during the period of the 4-10th of November, "62,500 citizens of the GDR" emigrated.[520] According to statistics shared in *MF*, more than 225,000 "emigrants from the GDR" reached the FRG in total in the summer and autumn of 1989.[521] *LD* reporters differentiated between "the majority of those crossing [who] carry many suitcases" and curious tourists "[who] do not hide the fact that they are crossing the border just for a visit".[522] Mi and Bay claimed in *LD* that "the former citizens of the GDR" "miss some certainties which they were used to in the GDR" and experienced a lack of housing,

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[517] Ač, "Postupné uklidňování". *Slovo*, 7 November 1989, Nr. 262, 1.
[518] Julia Sonnevend, *Stories without Borders*, 108-109.
[519] "NDR: Návrh zákona o cestování občanů". *Slovo*, 7 November 1989, Nr. 262, 1.; "NDR: demise ministrů". *Slovo*, 8 November 1989, Nr. 263, 1.; "Svolána konference SED". *Slovo*, 10 November 1989, Nr. 265, 1.; "Zasedání ÚV SED v Berlíně". *Slovo*, 11 November 1989, Nr. 266, 1.
[520] "Na hranicích s NSR". *Slovo*, 11 November 1989, Nr. 266, 3; Jaroslav Mikeš, "Najdou svůj nový domov?". *LD*, 18 November 1989, Nr. 272, 1.
[521] "Brémy – plno až po střechu". *MF*, 10 November 1989, Nr. 265, 5.; "Lidská řeka za zeď i hranice". *MF*, 13 November 1989, Nr. 267, 7.; "Přival lidí z NDR do NSR". *MF*, 13 November 1989, Nr. 267, 7.
[522] "Situace na velvyslanectví NSR". *LD*, 3 November 1989, Nr. 259, 5.; Ač, "Postupné iklidňování". *Slovo*, 7 November 1989, Nr. 262, 1.; Č-mi, "Na Čs. hraničních přechodech je živo". *LD*, 13 November 1989, Nr. 268, 1.

employment, and unexpected harassment and discrimination from the locals in the FRG.[523] Jaroslav Mikeš concluded in *LD* that "leaving home is not easy. Nor is it to change it. Especially when you do not know, whether that new home will be better."[524] However, a week later an *LD* reporter under the alias Hd pondered the many reasons why "the mass departures of predominantly young people" took place, and claimed the former non-reformist GDR government was to blame because it did "not pay any attention to the signals of dissatisfaction in the society."[525] Among the problems faced there, Hb listed "the dissatisfaction with the GDR's political, economic, social and cultural spheres" and criticised the "worn-out phrases and speeches" of ideologically hardline GDR leaders.[526] Although the emigrants were still stigmatised, it was acknowledged that structural problems in the GDR, overlooked by the previous government, existed and drove people away. Such depictions did not only represent the migrants as justified in their "exit" from the state but also as victims of systemic faults in the GDR which could not be hidden by rhetoric of success and prosperity of their state-socialist regime.

More sympathetic Czechoslovak reports justifying the East German emigration from the GDR came a week after the opening of the East-West German border in Berlin on the 9th of November. In order to gather sympathy and support for those who decided to leave in the spirit of socialist reform-mindedness, *Slovo* published an article from *Der Morgen* by Lothar Heinke that invited readers to imagine a divided Prague.[527] Heinke's depiction of an "East" and "West" Prague, and invoked humanist arguments claiming that "the Iron Curtain" divided families and friends, "locked" them away from each other.[528] This view echoes Oldřich Tůma's findings on the topic, which could be interpreted as a dramatic shift in Prague residents' social perceptions of the East German migration as some of them were "sorrowful" another Czechoslovakia did not exist for them to escape to.[529] This sentiment represented emigrating East Germans as lucky they had another, better place to live in, and as brave and determined to have persevered in trying to reach

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[523] Mi+Bay, "Řešení situace na velvyslanectví NSR". *LD*, 5 October 1989, Nr. 235, 3.; Mikeš, "Najdou svůj nový domov?". *LD*, 18 November 1989, Nr. 272, 5.; Sn, "Co je čeká?". *LD*, 20 October 1989, Nr. 248, 5.; Sn, "Je v NSR neonacismus?". *LD*, 10 October 1989, Nr. 239, 2.; "Těžkosti s přesídlenci". *LD*, 10 November 1989, Nr. 265, 2.
[524] Mikeš, "Najdou svůj nový domov?"
[525] Hd, "NDR: Čas přeměn". *LD*, 16 November 1989, Nr. 217, 1.
[526] Ibid.
[527] Lothar Heinke, "V nové dimenzi". *Der Morgen* in *Slovo*, 15 November 1989, Nr. 269, 2.
[528] Ibid.
[529] Oldřich Tůma, "9:00, "Praha-Libeň, horní nádraží: exodus východních němců přes prahu v září 1989". *Soudobé dějiny*, 6(2/3), 1999, 147-164, http://www.usd.cas.cz/casopis/soudobe-dejiny-2-3-1999/, (accessed: 8 April 2019), 149.

it. It also depicted those who did not emigrate – both other East Germans and even some Czechoslovaks – as jealous they did not choose or have the possibility of emigration at all. Heinke celebrated the significance and spontaneity of "the Wall's" historical disappearance, and urged more socialist reforms in the GDR. By reprinting this article, *Slovo* also spread this call in Czechoslovakia and aligned itself as the most socialist reformist and even liberal daily from the analysed Czech language press. Similarly, writing for *LD*, Hb praised "the liquidation of old dogmas" in the GDR with the opening of its borders, seen as a "contribution to the efforts of building a "common European home".[530] However, the author also accused the emigrants of "los[ing] faith in the brighter future" of the GDR and of "egoism".[531] Hence opened borders also signified building the new European order of cooperation while the East German migrants were selfishly only interested in their personal, not a "common European home". These reports represented the East German emigrants as being praised and envied for their decision or judged negatively for abandoning their nation-state. These views of an emigration process were not explored in depth in the Czech language press and the emigration as a selfish and detrimental act for the home country remained the prevalent way of understanding and depicting the East German migration of 1989 in the analysed press accounts.

5. 5. Migration narratives in the Czech language press

The overall discourse surrounding the East German migration in the Czechoslovak press stemmed from the ideologically orthodox binary socialist worldview that depicted "the West" as inherently and irreconcilably different and aggressive towards the socialist alliance of states. In this narrative, the far-right political establishment of the Federal Republic of Germany utilised East German migrants to eradicate the socialist identity of East Germany and reunify both states (and regain lost territories) on the FRG's terms. As the international situation changed and other states such as Hungary and Poland were increasingly permitting of East German migration through their territories and across its borders, the Czechoslovak press likewise modified its terminology surrounding the East German migration coverage. The views of this migration as a threat gave way to depictions of it as a justifiable course of action as a result of the GDR government's refusal to implement *perestroika*-type changes in East Germany. Although the Czechoslovak authorities opposed it as well, they were compelled to frame their decision to open borders

[530] Hd, "NDR: čas přeměn".
[531] Ibid.

to migrants as part of their socialist reform initiative. With time, however, the Czechoslovak coverage of this migration diverged in selected newspapers as their journalists and editors chose contrasting representations of the East German migrants. Two general strands of rhetoric emerged, in which *LD* positioned itself as a socialist reformist daily, *MF* leaned towards more liberal coverage of this topic, and *Slovo* offered the most progressive and subversive reporting of this migration process.

5. 5. 1. Reunification: migrants as threat

The most-widely used narrative, employed in the Czechoslovak press to cover the East German migration to the FRG, claimed that similar developments to those in 1989 had occurred in the past and were to repeat again.[532] It consisted of representations of migrants as "anti-GDR propaganda weapons" wielded by far-right FRG politicians who aimed to re-establish the "Third Reich" by aggressively reunifying both German states on the FRG's terms – the erasure of the socialist identity of the GDR state. Through invocations of selected portions of a "familiar" past narrative of foreign aggression, Czechoslovak newspapers portrayed emigrating East Germans as negatively "familiar" to the news readers. For instance, *LD* and *Slovo* reprinted the GDR press agency's ADN reports which authoritatively claimed that "like in the past, the enemies of socialism are trying to undermine the consequences of history" and they "drown its achievements with provocations and propaganda campaigns", or imperialist crusades, allegedly led by right-wing politicians and the media of the FRG.[533] In this narrative, the Czechoslovak Communist Union of Youth daily *MF* claimed that the East German migrants were naïvely "roped in" "to illegally leave their homeland" by the "hysterical FRG campaign".[534] Both the GDR and Czechoslovak press claimed that the FRG instrumentalised their greed for alleged riches in "the West" to deprive the GDR of its residents.[535] These arguments implied that East German migrants in 1989 were a threat not only to socialist but also Cold War order as a whole.

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[532] Sn, "Neonacismus v NSR". *LD*, 31 July 1989, Nr. 178, 2.
[533] "Provokační kampaň". *LD*, 12 September 1989, Nr. 215, 2.; Zč, "Křižácké tažení imperialismu". *Slovo*, 12 September 1989, Nr. 215, 2.; "Stanovisko NDR". *Slovo*, 25 August 1989, Nr. 200, 2.
[534] "Kampaň v tisku". MF, 11 August 1989, Nr. 189, 5.; "Prohlášení ADN". MF, 7 August 1989, Nr. 184, 3; "Návrat domů". MF, 9 September 1989, Nr. 213, 5.
[535] "K odchodu občanů NDR do NSR". *LD*, 3 October 1989, Nr. 233, 1.; "Nepřijatelné vměšování". *Slovo*, 6 September 1989, Nr. 210, 2.; "Jednostranné rozhodnutí". *Slovo*, 11 September 1989, Nr. 214, 2.; "Prohlášení ČTK ke kampani proti NDR". *Slovo*, 13 September 1989, Nr. 216, 3.

The core facet of this narrative was an argument that harkened back to the notion of West Germany's alleged aim to return to German state borders of 1937. The narrative warned of the nation's reignited imperialist ambitions. Although the Czechoslovak press devoted only a small amount of space for this migration along its Polish route, the role of Poland was significant in this narrative.[536] According to it, the migration was "incompatible with the fruitful European cooperation" as understood by socialist regimes, including the Soviet Union.[537] Although a socialist East Germany did not exist in 1937, history was allegedly being repeated in 1989 and its territory, together with the western Polish territories, were under threat at the alleged initial stages of this imperialist expansion through the eradication of East Germany. The Czechoslovak Youth daily *MF* published a report by Komárek who claimed that "contemporary central Europe is a fragile organism" and its stability rested on the established post-war European Cold War order – half of it consisted of state-socialist dictatorships, of which the East German one was the first bastion in the alleged attack by West Germany.[538] The migrants were depicted as pawns in a larger threat of destruction. This narrative remains a shorthand for understanding and thinking about contemporary migrations in the Czech Republic today. Although it was applied to a different group of migrants since 2015, particularly people seeking sanctuary in Europe from the Middle East and Africa, the robustness of the narrative claiming the resurrections of the Third Reich are happening as a media template remain staggeringly unchanged, as Pavel Doboš reveals in his research. It was not unusual among people with nationalist, anti-immigrant, xenophobic, Islamophobic, and racist attitudes in the Czech Republic to maintain that Angela Merkel was the next Hitler as Germany from 2015 had tried to allegedly destroy Europe and European culture by welcoming emigrants from the Middle East in Germany and advocating for their integration across the European Union.[539] In the context of 1989, this media template demonstrated how invoking the trope of foreign enemies to unite those supporting the state's ideals in their defence from alleged threats revealed the fragility of the socialist regime (in the GDR) instead. Yet despite claims of weaponization of this migration

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[536] Sn, "Co je čeká?". *LD*, 20 October 1989, Nr. 248, 5.
[537] "Provokační kampaň". *LD*, 12 September 1989, Nr. 215, 2.; "Sovětské stanovisko". *LD*, 23 September 1989, Nr. 225, 2.
[538] Martin Komárek, "Nevítaný kempink". MF, 3 October 1989, Nr. 233, 5.; "Prohlášení mluvčího Čs. vlády". MF, 4 October 1989, Nr. 234, 5.; Zč. "Křižácké tažení imperialismu". *Slovo*, 12 September 1989, Nr. 215, 2.
[539] Pavel Doboš, "Visualizing the European migrant crisis on social media: the relation of crisis visualities to migrant visibility". *Geografiska Annaler Series B Human Geography*, 105(1), 2022, 99-115 http://doi.org.10.1080/04353684.2022.2098156, (accessed: 23 November 2023), 104.

against GDR statehood, East German migrants were not "othered" in this narrative. On the contrary, they were made "familiar" to the readers as someone who should be left unsupported and ignored if the alleged repetition of the past was to be prevented.

Despite the prevalence of this recycled anti-immigration narrative in the Czech Republic today, it was not universally shared in the selected Czechoslovak newspapers, just as it does not occupy contemporary Czech discourse on migrations.[540] Although *MF*, *LD*, and *Slovo* had argued that the aim of the "campaigns" against the GDR in the form of the emigration of its citizens was "to persuade Western society that our [socialist] society is inhumane", the *Slovo* reporting diverged (as well as *MF*, to an extent) from *LD* as early as October 1989.[541] Increasingly, the second half of the Czechoslovak press reporting of the East German migration from October onwards blended the depictions of the migrants as threats and victims.

5. 5. 2. Reform: migrants as change-makers

Another narrative invoked a limited socialist-reformist *perestroika*, visible in the Czechoslovak press depictions of the East German migration. Facing domestic demands to liberalise its travel policy as a result of both the unrelenting emigration of its inhabitants and political protests, the East German government initiated changes followed by modifications in narratives regarding emigration. It was no longer an "anti-GDR" act by state traitors but rather a regrettable choice East Germans were compelled to make due to the faults of the Erich Honecker regime. The Czechoslovak press adopted the new narrative and portrayed migrants as victims as the new Egon Krenz government attempted to mend its internal and international images and bargain with emigrants. History was not repeating itself. The second migration narrative depicted migrants not as "others" but as less negatively "familiar" force of change in the GDR.

While *LD* remained more conservative in its reporting practices and representations of the East German migrants, *Slovo* and *MF* embraced the *perestroika*-style narrative of this migration as a stimulus for socialist reforms in the GDR through subversive rhetoric against the established communist discourse surrounding this

[540] Marie Jelínková, "A Refugee Crisis Without Refugees: Policy and media discourse on refugees in the Czech Republic and its implications". *Central European Journal of Public Policy*, 13(1), 2019, 33-45, http://doi.org.10.2478/cejpp-2019-0003, (accessed: 21 November 2023), 43.
[541] "K odchodu občanů NDR do NSR". *LD*, 3 October 1989, Nr. 233, 1.; "Opět asi tisíc lidí". *Slovo*, 3 October 1989, Nr. 233, 1.

migration.[542] *MF* reprinted an announcement from the GDR authorities that claimed that the reasons for its residents' emigration were "here in the GDR", not in "the West".[543] The migrants were "victims" of the systemic deterioration and mismanagement of the GDR state by hardline communist regime of Erich Honecker.[544] Claiming the necessity of reforming its system, *Slovo's* František Jandl appraised changes in attitudes and policies of the GDR authorities in two articles, "Continuity or Change?" and "Country on the Threshold of Changes".[545] Jandl argued that "neither the government nor society can avoid questioning their conscience any longer" as it was essential to re-think the socialist vision.[546] He criticised the arguments previously made by the GDR (and generally supported by the Czechoslovak) authorities claiming that the migration was influenced by "the propaganda from the other German state" as "it would be too idealistic for the Marxists to explain the departure of thousands basing their argument solely on this".[547] Jandl listed inadequate "living conditions and future potential provided for the young people in GDR society", as well as "bad planning, leading to shortages of products, bureaucracy that was too powerful, which, over time, killed any initiative and efforts" of reformist thinking as the main reasons for the East German emigration.[548] He concluded with a remark made by another SED member, Herman Kant, that the emigration "was a defeat" for the GDR government.[549] *Slovo* was the only newspaper which published these critical opinion pieces, which, it could be argued, also asked local Czech-speaking audiences whether Czechoslovakia needed similar changes, or whether it was next to experience them. As such, the emigration was depicted as a valid response to structural deficits, institutional neglect, and the lack of future prospects for the young generations of East Germans in the state. To what extent were these two main narratives and the representations of the East German migrants' identities that formed them comparable to those found in the Polish press? Were the migrants depicted as a threat to security and order, or victims of the systemic state-socialist failures in the hardline GDR regime?

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[542] "Problémy budeme řešit sami". MF, 12 October 1989, Nr. 241, 5.
[543] Ibid.
[544] Ibid.
[545] František Jandl, "Země na prahu změn". *Slovo*, 7 November 1989, Nr. 262, 2.; František Jandl, "Kontinuita nebo změny?". *Slovo*, 21 October 1989, Nr. 249, 2.
[546] Ibid.
[547] Jandl, "Kontinuita nebo změny?".
[548] Ibid.; Lothar Heinke, "V nové dimenzi". *Der Morgen* in *Slovo*, 15 November 1989, Nr. 269, 2.
[549] Jandl, "Kontinuita nebo změny?".

6. POLISH PRESS

The 1989 East German migration west via Poland is largely missing from the topical scholarship in Czech, Polish, and English language publications despite the Polish political and social context being decisive in how this migration progressed in the autumn and summer months of that year. As this thesis looks at this migration comparatively as it unfolded in the newspapers in Czechoslovakia and Poland, this chapter presents an analysis of textual and visual depictions of East German migrants in 215 news reports of four distinct officially-circulating Polish language newspapers – the Polish United Workers' Party's daily *Trybuna Ludu* (*TL*), their rival "Solidarność" trade union's daily *Gazeta Wyborcza* (*GW*), a Catholic intellectual weekly *Tygodnik Powszechny* (*TP*), and a Warsaw newspaper *Życie Warszawy* (*ŻW*).[550] The migrants' identities were inseparable from the representations of their migration spaces (East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, West Germany), places (West German diplomatic missions), and the territorial boundaries they crossed. The Polish press expressed greater interest in the historical Polish-German relationships and its border-related issues in their discussions of the East German migration than the Czech or English language reporting did. Hence, this chapter begins with the analysis of border representations. Then it shifts to the representations of migrants at Prague and Warsaw's West German diplomatic missions which were tied to their respective portrayals of Czechoslovakia, Poland, and both German states. This chapter reveals changing ideological views in the Polish political and cultural circles regarding the country-in-transit's past, present, and future entanglements with both German states, as well as its rethinking of the Czechoslovak-Polish relations.

6. 1. 1989 in Poland

East Germans, who reached Warsaw's Saska Kępa district in the summer of 1989, entered what was arguably a state in (democratic) transition which exhibited many freedoms both emigrants and protesters in the German Democratic Republic sought for themselves. To illustrate this ideological shift in Poland at the time, it is worth considering the inaugural article of the "Solidarność" trade union's newspaper *Gazeta Wyborcza*, written by its editor-in-chief, historian, and dissident Adam Michnik, published on the 9th of May –

[550] Unless stated otherwise, all primary and secondary sources in Polish language were translated by the author of this thesis.

Liberation Day as celebrated in the Soviet Union and its allied states. Dubbed in the PZPR's *Trybuna Ludu* an "anti-socialist force" during the 1989 workers' strikes, Michnik wittily criticised the many hypocrisies and general decline of the PZPR's power in 1989.[551] Allowed to officially circulate by the Polish United Workers' Party (Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza, PZPR) at the beginning of May in 1989, *Gazeta* published an article entitled "A Spectre is Haunting Europe", in which Michnik, with a satirical glee, intertextually channelled the "Communist Manifesto" to signal the changing Cold War order in Europe. He claimed that "the spectre of the end of the totalitarian system" and "the spectre of the end of the barracks communism" "haunted" Europe.[552] He turned Marx and Engels' famous words upside down when he praised the changing international and Polish political order that favoured "people striving for freedom" rather than those accepting the forced collectivism of the communist party bureaucrats.[553] Arguing against the illusory freedom of the *perestroika* and *glasnost* reforms, offered by the Soviet Union leadership, Michnik supported the hope and inspiration of Václav Havel, a Czechoslovak playwright and one of the leaders of Charter 77, "who spat out the gag of fear, [and] stood against the all-powerful apparatus of power".[554] This bold essay stands out from other analysed news reports because it tackled the political ideology in Poland the most directly and drastically from the analysed selection. It left no illusion as to the ideological profile of GW, and demonstrated the extent to the freedom of speech one could expect from this newspaper in May 1989.

Commenting on the rhetorical changes in Poland in 1989, philologist and literary theorist Michał Głowiński analysed an episode of the *Dziennik Telewizyjny* TV program for *Tygodnik Powszechny*, a critical Catholic weekly associated with Polish intellectuals.[555] Contrary to Michnik's wishful article in *GW*, Głowiński found that there "are no patterns of expression that would be felt as new and appropriate" for the changed Polish political power balance.[556] Głowiński illustrated this by showing that during the PZPR monopoly on communications, the word "party" was always used in its definite

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[551] Carl Tighe, "Living in unreality: politics and language in the People's Republic of Poland". *Journal of European Studies*, 22(2), 1992, 143-174, https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-022-01240-2, (accessed: 21 November 2023), 158: "anti-socialist force" in the Party's language meant "opposition of any kind" as "anti-social and anti-national", and even as "'fascist', [..] an anti-patriotic alliance with foreign fascists."
[552] Adam Michnik, "Widmo Krąży Po Europie". *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 9 May 1989: *Kasernenkommunismus* is the German term for "barracks communism".
[553] Ibid.
[554] Ibid.
[555] Michał Głowiński, "Nowa Epoka – Stary Język". *Tygodnik Powszechny*, Nr. 48, 26 November 1989, 1, 7.
[556] Ibid., 7.

form as "the Party" – the one and only, PZPR.[557] In the TV episode, a candidate to a civic elections committee resigned from their position after an accusation of supporting the discredited PZPR platform when they represented a completely different political party. With the PZPR at the helm of ascribing particular meanings to ordinary words for 45 years, it is natural that Głowiński concluded his article by noting the lack of change in Polish media in the early days of the state's transition. However, although the language had been corrupted by the PZPR, he was hopeful that the situation would change with their departure and the arrival of new, liberal forces in the Polish politics because he maintained that "speech responds quickly to social changes".[558] The language of official political power was bound to eventually constitute and represent new Polish realities and new "worlds" of thinking and seeing them. To what extend did this observation apply to "old enemies" from (East) Germany? How did the Polish media discourse represent the East German migration and identities of migrants?

As noted by Głowiński, and later argued by Carl Tighe, the Polish language under the communist party "was a language where concepts of moral, economic and political significance had been emptied of agreed, normative, social meaning and refilled at will by the Party". [559] How did it conceptualise the 1989 East German migration and migrants? The Warsaw emigration route from the GDR was less crowded than in Prague, which is also reflected in the short notes on the topic passing for news reports in the Polish dailies.[560] This emigration option opened up more for the migrants only in October 1989 and it presented East Germans with geographical and legal hurdles – the Polish-GDR Oder and Neisse river borders were treacherous and Poland-bound East Germans required a visa unlike those heading to Czechoslovakia (until October 1989). The significance of this migration via Poland was aptly portrayed by the Polish communist party's *Trybuna Ludu* journalist Daniel Luliński, who claimed that "no other topic in the mass media was as important and emotionally presented as the flow of thousands of refugees from the German Democratic Republic". [561] A journalist under the initials So from *Gazeta Wyborcza* reflected on the migration similarly, noting that it was a true "exodus", "the

[557] Ibid.
[558] Głowiński, "Nowa Epoka – Stary Język", 7.
[559] Tighe, "Living in unreality: politics and language in the People's Republic of Poland", 167.
[560] Statistics are unclear: *TP* claims over 10,000 of East Germans found their way to the FRG via its diplomatic missions in Prague and Warsaw between the 30th of September and the 22nd of October 1989, in: "Obraz tygodnia". *TP*, Nr. 43 (2104), 22 October 1989, 1.
[561] Daniel Luliński, "W RFN o uchodźcach zza Łaby- fanfary, kłopoty i przestrogi polityków". *Trybuna Ludu*, Nr. 213, 13 September 1989, 8.

largest movement of the population of the GDR to the West since the days preceding the erection of the Berlin Wall in 1961".[562] Biblical references in *Gazeta* represented migrating East Germans as people fleeing persecution and injustice but who were righteous in their decision. *Trybuna Ludu* selected the term "refugees" (*uchodźcy*) to denote a similar view but also expressed judgement that their "exodus" was inconveniencing politicians. As such, the ideological lines that used to separate the representatives of these two newspapers were blurring as the use of similar terms also implied similar meanings.

Initially, the new Polish government supported the Czechoslovak Communist Party's stance regarding this migration as "an internal issue of the GDR", which adhered to its socialist alliance pacts and shirked responsibility for the wellbeing of the migrants.[563] Similarly to the Czechoslovak reporting practices, the Polish migration news usually appeared in the "Foreign News" section and reached the front pages of the selected Polish newspapers only during its most critical times: people's arrivals, departures, and any major travel regulation developments regarding the border closures and openings.[564] This initial rhetorical externalisation of the topic in the Polish press meant that the 1989 East German migration was broadly conceptualised as a development in which the Polish state had a marginal or no role to play, comparable to how the Czechoslovak press approached this news item as well.

6. 2. Borders

This migration presented a conundrum to the new Polish government as it did previously to the reforming Hungarian leadership. From the beginning of the Polish reporting on the topic in May 1989, the representations of the migrants were tightly connected with the changes of the Hungarian border regime, as was also noted in the Czechoslovak newspapers. As did the Czechoslovak *Svobodné Slovo*, so did the Polish communist daily *Trybuna Ludu* announce the Hungarian dismantling of the border signalling system with Austria with a warning that travel "regulations and rules remain unchanged" and those

[562] So, "Wagony czekają". *GW*, 3 September 1989.; in the Book of Exodus, the Israelites escape from Egypt.
[563] Jerzy Weber, "Uciekinierzy – wewnętrzną sprawą NRD". *Trybuna Ludu*, Nr. 207, 6 September 1989, 6.; PAP, "Kwestia uchodźów z NRD". *TL*, Nr. 209, 8 September 1989, 4.
[564] *Tygodnik Powszechny* reports on East German migration present an exception because they were always placed on the front page on the left hand-side, confined to the "Obraz Tygodnia" international news section, i. e. "Obraz tygodnia". *Tygodnik Powszechny*, Nr. 41 (2102), 8 October 1989, 1.

aiming to cross it were required to present valid travel permissions.[565] Those who tried to cross the Hungarian-Austrian borders without them were represented in *TL* as East German "tourists" (*turyści*) who had permissions for their summer holidays there but were neither officially allowed to emigrate nor planned to extend their stays.[566] *TL* reported that "illegal border crossing" attempts from Hungary were countered because of the notion of the "inviolability of national borders".[567] Established border crossing laws were regarded as right and unchangeable, conceptualised as parts of a self-evident and natural "order of things". The reluctance to define East Germans as "emigrants" or "refugees" was palpable in the reporters' use of the term "tourist", which also normalised the increased number of East Germans in the Hungarian borderland resorts. It downplayed their emigration attempts as challenging established notions of state borders and the socialist order they preserved.

Bordering a nation-state sustained the order within it. Zygmunt Bauman maintained that "the construction of good order was, invariably, an exercise in inclusion and exclusion: in the unconditionality of law and the unconditionality of its exemptions."[568] This view could be applied to explain how the Polish border system operated, which was not dissimilar from the Czechoslovak press depictions of state frontiers. A border is understood as "a crucial asset in individual and nation-based identity formation" – its representation as inviolable in the Polish and Czechoslovak press contributed to cementing social and political differences between the "good citizens" who stayed in their countries and went on holidays with visas and the "bad" ones who allegedly disregarded state-sanctioned ways of travel.[569] This meant that although liberalism and pluralism were visible in the Polish press discourse on this migration, the migrants were popularly perceived as "illegal" border crossers regardless of changes in political system in Poland in the summer of 1989. Hence it is unsurprising that *TL* popularly identified the migrants in the summer of 1989 as "citizens of the GDR" (*obywatele NRD*) and "escapees" (*uciekinierzy*) in its reports. They were contextually tied to breaking socialist border laws and were perceived as "fugitives" (*zbiegi)*. The news publications in Poland

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[565] PAP, "Likwidacja zasieków na zachodniej granicy Węgier". *TL*, Nr. 176, 29-30 July, 7.; PAP, "Wobec turystów, którzy pozostali na Węgrzech bez zezwolenia". *TL*, Nr. 188, 14-15 August, 8.
[566] Ibid.
[567] PAP, "Uciekinierzy z NRD nadal w zachodnioniemieckich placówkach". *TL*, Nr. 189, 16 August 1989, 6.
[568] Zygmunt Bauman, *Society Under Siege*. Cambridge: Polity; Malden: Blackwell, 2002, 227.
[569] Marc Silberman, Karen E. Till, and Janet Ward, "Introduction", 1-18, in: Silberman, M., Till, K. E., and Ward, J. (eds.) *Walls, Borders, Boundaries: Spatial and Cultural Practices in Europe*. New York; Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2012, 2.

and Czechoslovakia shared similarities in defining East Germans in terms related to criminal activity and illegality depending on their representatives in both countries and their views.

6. 2. 1. Push-backs and compromises at the Polish borders

Tensions concerning the new, more liberal outlook of the coalitional Polish government and the old border regulations impacted the management of the East German migration in the country, as observed in the liberal-minded "Solidarność" newspaper and their rivals. At the beginning of October, Roman Stefański reported in *GW* that the Polish border guards, under the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the leadership of the Polish communist party member Czesław Kiszczak, detained East Germans at the mutually patrolled Polish-GDR border, including a family with a 4-year-old child who swam across the river Neisse, and another "407 people" were turned back "to the GDR" from the river Oder.[570] *GW*'s Włodzimierz Słowiński interviewed the commander of the Border Protection Forces, Gen. Feliks Stronnik, who argued adamantly that "citizens of the GDR", attempting to "cross the border illegally" without documents or circumventing the established border crossing points, "firstly violate our law, and secondly, […] the agreement of 1969" with East Germany.[571] Stronnik maintained that to do anything else than to deport East Germans back to the GDR would require "a clear order from the government."[572] The implication of sending "East German escapees" (*uciekinierzy z NRD*), or fugitives in this context, back to the GDR side of the border meant they could face a "common [prison] sentence ranging from 1 to 2,5 years".[573] The view that East Germans belonged to East Germany implied a nationalist mindset behind the decision to prevent them from entering Poland and upholding its agreements with East Germany. Although it was reported that the majority of East Germans were reaching Poland with required documents while only a small minority risked their lives in the dangerous waters of Oder and Neisse, this practice demonstrated "acceptable" ways of controlling the borders in the new Polish political context – through a trade of people perceived as fugitives in the state that criminalised their aspirations if it involved travelling abroad to

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[570] Roman Stefański, "Pociągi coraz dłuższe". *GW*, 5 October 1989.; Włodzimierz Słowiński, "WPŁAW PRZEZ RZEKĘ PRZYJAŹNI". *GW*, 8 October 1989.
[571] Słowiński, "WPŁAW PRZEZ RZEKĘ PRZYJAŹNI".; "Droga wolna". *GW*, 10 October 1989.; "Rzecznik rządu wyjaśnia". *GW*, 11 October 1989.
[572] "Rzecznik rządu wyjaśnia". *GW*, 11 October 1989.
[573] "Obraz tygodnia". *TP*. Nr. 43 (2104), 22 October 1989, 1.; Mm, "My tu zostaniemy!". *GW*, 9 October 1989.

fulfil them for diplomatic peace between Poland and East Germany.[574] The new Poland complied with the laws of the old Poland at the beginning of the East German migration through its territory.

There was little consensus among the Polish authorities regarding the East German migration. While individual politicians supported their plea, only a collective decision could begin to infuse new interpretations of functions of the state frontiers. For instance, Polish Foreign Minister Krzysztof Skubiszewski maintained in an interview with Paweł Smoleński of *GW* that the government had a "responsibility to deal with refugees in a humanitarian and pragmatic manner" but, while he "could easily imagine the determination that drove" East Germans to flee the GDR, "legal" ways (and bound by the Polish-GDR agreements) of reaching Poland remained preferable to any others.[575] Contrary to how the term "humanitarian" was used in migration discussions in the Czechoslovak press, but the Polish press related it to Skubiszewski's "firm belief" that "state interests should be conducted in such a way that the interests of the individual are not prejudiced".[576] "Pragmatic" meant that the new Polish government aimed to maintain "good relations with East and West Germany" because "many Polish people go there to earn money" and their interests had to be taken into account.[577] This implied that similar travel arrangements would have to be put in place for Polish citizens commuting for work to both German states if East Germans were allowed to enter Poland freely. As a result of this indecision, East Germans suffered at the Polish borders. *GW* reporter Piotr Tymochowicz spoke with East Germans about their GDR-Polish border-crossing ordeals. People under the pseudonyms "Y" and "Z" claimed that every day 600 people risked their lives to reach Poland this way, sometimes with young children, and they were often caught and separated from their children while others never returned to East Germany from their business and other organized trips to Poland.[578] Stories about East German border-crossing experiences clashed with well-meaning official Polish governmental ideas of how people should travel.

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[574] M. M., "Pociąg z Warszawy przybył do Hanoweru". *Życie Warszawy*, Nr. 234, 7-8 October 1989, 6.
[575] Pawel Smoleński, "Jestem przeciwny DEPORTACJOM". *GW*, 11 October 1989.
[576] Ibid.
[577] Ibid.
[578] Piotr Tymochowicz, "Przez Polskę szybko i bezpiecznie". *GW*, 18 October 1989: "Y" also added that a family they knew was deported from Poland, the parents arrested in the GDR and their children placed in a "reformatory school", or a youth detention or correctional facility.

The humanitarian approach the Polish press took, after the major Polish political decision to ignore its agreements with the GDR and stop deporting East Germans from Poland, made way for happier stories migrants could share with those reading news about this migration. The GDR, FRG and Polish governments negotiated and allowed East Germans to renounce their citizenship at the GDR diplomatic missions in Poland, receive new identification documents at the FRG Embassy in Warsaw, and leave for the FRG legally on the 17th of October by planes that Poland supplied.[579] In the *TP* report on the decision, the East German migrants were referred to as "refugees" (*uchodźcy*), looking for asylum in the FRG, which therefore reconceptualised their status. Hence, a new vocabulary used for migration reports was taking shape in Poland from mid-October 1989 which closely resembled the one used in the *Associated Press*. *GW* reporter Piotr Tymochowicz interviewed one such East German, a "Mr. P. G.", a "political prisoner" who was shot at by the GDR border guards as he ran for the Polish border. Mr. P. G. was grateful to the Polish border staff and residents in Warsaw for welcoming him.[580] According to the reporter, since the introduction of this new development in the East German migration management, the Polish borders offered safety to those crossing it, which implied that they had not done so previously. A similar type of self-praise was also noted in the Czechoslovak press regarding the decision to open the borders with West Germany. A note of pride, detected here in the Polish press, also tied to border regulations and their liberalisation, portrayed both migration spaces, ruled by different political powers, as propping themselves up as responsible, professional, and moral authorities. The previously interviewed "X" and "Z", like "Mr. P. G.", also thanked the Polish border guards, the Red Cross, and the Polish society for "their hospitality and help", claiming they "will never forget that."[581] East German praise for the Polish authorities, then, only strengthened this projected view of themselves and revealed the diversity of migrants' experiences at the GDR-Polish borders.

6. 2. 2. The Czechoslovak border compromises

The Polish press depicted the Czechoslovak borders in contrast to their own. They were lifted for East Germans on the 3rd of November which enabled direct emigration to West Germany.[582] *TL* represented this decision as the "liberalisation of travel" on the part of

[579] "Orbaz Tygodnia". *TP*. Nr. 44 (2105), 29 October 1989, 1.
[580] Piotr Tymochowicz, "Przez Polskę szybko i bezpiecznie". *GW*, 18 October 1989.
[581] Ibid.
[582] Os, "Krenz obiecuje zmiany". *GW*, 5 November 1989; PAP, "Trwa exodus obywateli NRD". *TL*, Nr. 258, 6 November 1989, 6

the reforming Czechoslovak communist authorities.[583] In a week, 18,000 of East Germans had left the GDR solely through this opening.[584] Reporting for *ŻW*, Maciej Jaranowski reported on the 10 km-long queues of East German cars and over 10,000 people crossing into West Germany daily.[585] *ŻW* also provided one of the very few visual glimpses into this migration in the Polish press. It depicted a queue of "Trabant" cars on the road leading to one of the Czechoslovak-FRG border crossings (Figure 6-1). A photograph of a person

Figure 6-1: Traffic jam at the Czechoslovak-FRG borders, an East German man sitting near his car.
In: Maciej Jaranowski, "Exodus z NRD: co dalej?". *ŻW*, Nr. 258, 6 November 1989, 6.

in the front seat of his car and other people in the distance, shown with their vehicles, offered a fresh view of this migration compared to previous photographs in the Polish and the Czechoslovak press. Unlike the previously published images of abandoned East German vehicles, the unidentified photographer decided to capture migrants together with the iconic symbols of their migration, often depicted in the Czechoslovak press separately from their owners and in a crudely materialist fashion. If empty and abandoned cars depicted the migrants as feigning their need for safety and help from oppression and shortages in the GDR, this photographer personalised the process of mobility. A car without its driver is stuck, it is a nuisance, yet one with a driver nearby implies it will move again. Fittingly, *GW* answered the question Jaranowski posed in his news report. "What's next?" for the East German "exodus, he asked, after 9000 East Germans left the GDR via the Czechoslovak-FRG border in the first day of its opening; according to a

[583] PAP, "Trwa exodus obywateli NRD": and about 400 people in Warsaw. At that point, *TL* also reported that 80,000 East German migrants had left the GDR since August 1989. Just before 9 November, Egon Krenz reportedly spoke of 200,000 leaving in 1989, in: Jerzy Weber, "Krenz: rozpoczął się społeczny process odnowy socjalizmu". *TL*, Nr. 261, 9 November 1989, 4.
[584] Jerzy Weber, "Project ustawy o wyjazdach zagranicznych". *TL*, Nr. 259, 7 November 1989, 7.
[585] PAP, "1300 uchodźców w ambasadzie RFN w Pradze". *ŻW*, Nr. 256, 3 November 1989, 4.; Maciej Jaranowski, "Exodus z NRD: co dalej?". *ŻW*, Nr. 258, 6 November 1989, 6.

journalist under the alias Os, it was "not the end, thousands will follow."[586] Michał Księżarczyk claimed in *ŻW*, which followed the stance of reform socialism in a similar vein like *TL*, that the proposed changes in the GDR were "cosmetic" and "targeted mainly at fixing the economic situation" rather than the "social aspirations and expectations" of its population – this strategy "only put off the eventual explosion".[587] The events of the 9th of November were just a few days away.[588]

6. 3. Migration places

While reports from the FRG diplomatic mission in Prague formed the centre of the Czechoslovak press coverage of the East German migration in the summer and autumn of 1989, this theme was not as important in the Polish press as its concern with state borders.[589] East Germans sheltered at the FRG diplomatic compounds and transformed them – as well as a diplomatic representation of a political space, the West German state, they functioned as places of encounters between migrants, reporters, and locals. As previously noted, they were "created through acts of naming", "distinctive activities and imaginings associated with particular social spaces." [590] Official ideologically conservative newspapers, such as *Trybuna Ludu*, had initially defined the FRG Embassies as "tunnels of escape" (*tunele ucieczki*), interpreted as an "illegal" and dishonourable way of emigration, yet also included reports on hospitality the migrants received in Hungary, unlike the Czechoslovak press. [591] Other Polish newspapers shared certain representational choices with *Trybuna*, although progressively offered a more liberal conceptualisation of the diplomatic missions which in turn imbued their depictions of the East German migrants, their migration spaces, and borders they crossed with a rhetoric comparable to the *Associated Press*. However, the Polish press employed a positive self-representation, which included Warsaw's FRG Embassy and a negative other-

[586] Rs, "Przez Czechy bliżej". *GW*, 5 November 1989.; Os, "Krenz obiecuje zmiany". *GW*, 5 November 1989.
[587] Michał Księżarczyk, "Czas spełnienia". *ŻW*, Nr. 263, 13 November 1989, 6.
[588] "Krenz obiecuje, Niemcy uciekają". *GW*, 25 October 1989.; Mm, "Krenz obiecuje, policja straszy". *GW*, 26 October 1989.; Jj, "Kiedy runie mur". *GW*, 30 October 1989.; Jj, "Pieriestrojka po niemiecku". *GW*, 1 November 1989.
[589] (os). "Którędy na zachód". *GW*, 6 August 1989.; PAP, "17 tys. obywateli NRD przybyło do RFN". *TL*, Nr. 219, 20 September 1989, 6.
[590] Courtney J. Campbell, "Space, Place and Scale: Human Geography and Spatial History in *Past and Present*". *Past and Present*, 239, 2018, e23-e45, http://doi.org/10.1093/pastj/gtw006, (accessed: 3 June 2021), e26.
[591] PAP, "Uciekinierzy z NRD nadal w zachodnioniemieckich placówkach". *TL*, Nr. 189, 16 August 1989, 6.; PAP, "Placówki RFN "tunelem ucieczek" dla obywateli NRD". *TL*, Nr. 192, 19 August 1989, 8.

representation, which was applied to depictions of East German migration management in Prague and GDR.

6. 3. 1. Pity for those in Prague

If the Czechoslovak press afforded only minimal interest in their coverage of the Polish route of the 1989 East German migration west, the Polish press demonstrated an equally balanced focus on its development in Prague and Warsaw. It could be argued that the drama at the FRG diplomatic mission in the Czechoslovak capital communicated its newsworthiness well and was picked up by Polish journalists while the events in Warsaw naturally required their utmost attention. It could also be said that it was important for all newspapers, especially those which became less ideological, such as *Trybuna Ludu*, to distance themselves from their previous allies in Czechoslovakia. Other newspapers, such as *Gazeta Wyborcza*, had arguably chosen a more transparent path than their oppositional rivals from its inception in May. General portrayals of Prague's FRG diplomatic mission were related to uncertainty, danger, and a lack of safety in the Polish press. *Gazeta Wyborcza* reported that few East Germans doubted the FRG Embassy protection in Prague and risked their lives by swimming to Hungary "illegally", across the rivers of the Danube or Oder, despite the risk of drowning on their way to "freedom".[592] Access to the Prague mission was represented as invariably controlled by the Czechoslovak police behaviour – they could be both harsh and lenient to migrants. News reports noted that many East Germans in Prague attempted to get into the mission clandestinely by "discreetly approaching the [Embassy] fence" and "quickly jumping over it" because the local militia could "send the would-be emigrants back" to the GDR.[593] *GW* reporter Krystyna Grzybowska observed "desperate" East Germans there, "wandering in the streets, sleeping on sidewalks, and waiting for mercy that never comes", a description that criticised the political impasse in the search for a viable solution that would end their misery.[594] *GW* relayed humanitarian concerns for the wellbeing of the East German migrants at the FRG diplomatic mission in Prague and represented Czechoslovakia as an inhospitable space, a representation comparable with the *AP* reports.

The PZPR's *Trybuna Ludu* held a different view on the migrants. The report represented them in Prague as "youth and people with certain professional experience or

[592] Os, "Którędy na Zachód". *GW*, 6 August 1989.; Os, "Uchodźcy z NRD: przez płot - czy z powrotem?". *GW*, 27 September 1989.; (PS). "Przepłynęli Odrę". *GW*. 2 October 1989.
[593] Os, "Uchodźcy z NRD: przez płot - czy z powrotem?".
[594] Krystyna Grzybowska, "Droga do azylu". *GW*, 7 August 1989.

[those who] completed secondary or higher education" but also as a group of "criminal elements, adventurers, unemployed or people with an obscure past."[595] These depictions both implied a dire situation in the GDR that forced young families and professionals, the future of the state, to leave, and also ridiculed East Germans as naïve and impulsive people for their thoughtless decision to emigrate "illegally". While the representations of the migrants as criminals or tourists were already encountered in the Czechoslovak press, the description of them as "people with an obscure past" (*ludzie z niejasną przeszłością*) was new.[596] It represented the migrants as deceitful, disingenuous, and dishonest, and urged caution before sympathising. It also meant that statistics about their useful skills and occupations did not necessarily mean that they were genuine and trustworthy individuals. The PZPR press countered *GW*'s sympathies and humanitarian concerns.

Assumptions about visual aesthetics of the FRG Embassy and the migrants engulfed the journalistic practices employed by the Polish reporters as they did the English language *AP* news. The FRG Embassy in Prague was represented as a "campsite" in the Czechoslovak and Polish news reports.[597] Its surroundings were telling of the representation of the FRG as a state of migrants' destination and of the Czechoslovak authorities as responsible for hosting them. The migrating East Germans were represented in *TL* and *Życie Warsawy* as responsible for the unsightly chaotic transformation of an official and typically spotless institution into a dirty campground. A Prague correspondent for *ŻW*, Wojciech Wasilewski, reported that the compound was full with 1100 people staying in large tents, the food supply from the FRG was decreasing, and it generally lacked basic sanitation.[598] *TL* reporter Marian Kuszewski called it a "pitiful sight" (*żałosny widok*) due to "the growing piles of rubbish, bottles, [and] empty packages" which surrounded "young families with children, even babies".[599] In the *AP*, such a portrayal was usually followed by a humanitarian concern for the wellbeing of East Germans. Contrastingly, Kuszewski claimed that the migrants "do not look like people who are in search of bread and jobs" in West Germany but appear "well-nourished and neat, even wearing fashionable clothes."[600] These latter comments tackled potential

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[595] PAP, "17 tys. obywateli NRD przybyło do RFN". *TL*, Nr. 219, 20 September 1989, 6.
[596] Michalovska, *'The Prague Exit'*, 38.: The Czechoslovak Secret Police was worried about the Stasi agents sent by the GDR authorities who infiltrated the East German migrant groups to collect information on the migrants' wishes, aims, reasons for emigration, first hand.
[597] PAP, "17 tys. obywateli NRD przybyło do RFN".; Daniel Luliński, "Pragmatyczne rozwiązanie problem tysięcy uchodźców. Specjalne pociągi przybywają do RFN". *TL*, Nr. 229, 2 October 1989, 1.
[598] Wojcieh Wasilewski, "Krytyczna sytuacja". *ŻW*, Nr. 226, 28 September 1989, 4.
[599] Marian Kuszewski, "Sprzed ambasady RFN i okolic". *TL*, Nr. 232, 5 October 1989, 8.
[600] Ibid.

sympathies towards the migrants and exposed a common fallacy regarding the understanding of aesthetics of migrating people, who tend to be put into a hierarchy of deservingness of help and sympathy depending on how raggedy and poverty-stricken they appear, as was discussed in the chapter on the *AP* new coverage of this migration. This representation of East Germans implied they were emigrating under false pretences of oppression and shortages – rather, they were greedy, selfish, and had allegedly wanted an adventure. As the living conditions at the FRG Embassy in Prague were termed a "pitiful sight", the emigrating East Germans were depicted as themselves responsible for the woeful ordeals they experienced at the FRG Embassy. The representations of the West Germany diplomatic mission conveyed a sense of chaos, lack of respect for people waiting in squalor in their mission's compound who had potentially not truly deserved it, and the overall inability to host thousands of them. It also criticised the Czechoslovak authorities for their non-cooperation and inaction as they witnessed this human misery, which the Polish would not have allowed.

The decision reached on the 30th of September to allow East Germans to emigrate to the FRG via the GDR was discussed on the front pages of the selected Polish newspapers as a breakthrough in this migration story, similarly as it was depicted elsewhere.[601] *GW* reported that the East German GDR passports were confiscated by the Stasi as people transited via GDR territory where they were issued with documents for "legal emigration" (*legalna emigracja*), depicted as a preventative measure against a spread of infection in Prague.[602] According to Daniel Luliński, writing in *TL*, this "pragmatic decision" prevented the GDR from "losing face" and facing international humiliation, which was an unusually critical evaluation of the GDR decision for *TL*.[603] Yet *ŻW* published parts of Erich Honecker's interview for the United Kingdom's *Daily Mail* in which he expressed concern for "danger of disease" spreading among the children at the Embassies and also a wish to "end the noise from the media."[604] The rhetorical connection of this migration with disease and social disorder offered a deeply derogatory view of the former residents of the GDR. Jonathan Xavier Inda has compellingly argued that the nineteenth century germ theory found a following in the twentieth-century

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[601] Our own information, "Porozumienie w sprawie uchodźców z NRD. Specjalne pociągi z Warszawy i Pragi do RFN. Nowi uciekinierzy w obu ambasadach". *ŻW*, Nr. 229, 2 October 1989, 1.; Jj,"POCIĄGI WOLNOŚCI". *GW*, 1 October 1989.; Luliński, "Pragmatyczne rozwiązanie problem tysięcy uchodźców".
[602] Jj, "POCIĄGI WOLNOŚCI".; Jj, "Uchodźcy z NRD". *GW*, 2 October 1989.; Luliński, "Pragmatyczne rozwiązanie problem tysięcy uchodźców".
[603] Luliński, "Pragmatyczne rozwiązanie poblem tysięcy uchodźców".
[604] "Pociągi specjalne wyruszyły do RFN". *ŻW*, Nr. 232, 5 October 1989, 4.

nativists who attributed "the sickness of the nation to the influx of foreign populations."[605] Honecker's interview represented the GDR government as saving the most vulnerable infant migrants from illnesses and diseases their parents were responsible for. Approached more symbolically, their emigration was a viral infection, potentially "infecting" others with similar plans in socialist states, which caused harm to the children, the future of the GDR. Discussing this theory on a national level, Inda claimed that this representational practice was held together by "asymmetrically opposed counter-concepts": the (host or transit) space was portrayed as supporting the foreign immigrant populations despite them being detrimental to its body politic.[606] Therefore, by employing the public health emergency frames to explain the compromise the GDR government was forced to make in allowing the East German migrants to leave to the FRG, Honecker degraded the migrants to agents of disease and rhetorically dressed this perspective as humanitarianism, which the Polish newspapers *TL* and *ŻW* reproduced in their representations of the migrants in Prague.

This idea was supported by the following GDR government decisions and actions in Dresden. As "special trains" from Prague were passing it, 5500 people gathered in the station and tried to jump onto them while others attempted to block the route, for which they were reportedly beaten by the riot police and injured by passing trains.[607] As *Gazeta* reported, the official Foreign Ministry spokesperson of the GDR, Wolfgang Meyer, called those East Germans "traitors" (*zdrajcy*), "criminals and anti-social elements who do not want to work and cannot find their place in a normal [GDR socialist] society."[608] Emigrants were represented as ungrateful, purposeless, and detrimental for the economic and social fabric of GDR society, and this message was published in *GW*. Although several *TL* reports criticised this violence and the arrests that followed in Dresden, its reports fed the Polish news readers interpretations of this incident from the perspective of the GDR authorities who claimed that "refugees from the GDR" "harm themselves and betray their homeland" by leaving it.[609] Choosing "exit" was depicted as a socially harmful practice while staying in the state strengthened socialism in the country.[610] The

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[605] Jonathan Xavier Inda, "Foreign Bodies: Migrants, Parasites, and the Pathological Nation". *Discourse*, 22(3), 2000, 46-62, https://doi.org/10.1353/dis.2000.0006, (accessed: 6 Dec 2021), 47.
[606] Ibid.
[607] Jj, "WOLNOŚĆ Z OPÓŹNIENIEM". *GW*, 5 October 1989.; Jj, ""POCIĄGI WOLNOŚCI" pod specjalnym nadzorem". *GW*, 4 October 1989.; Jj, "POCIĄGI WOLNOŚCI". *GW*, 1 October 1989.
[608] Jj, "Uchodźcy z NRD". *GW*, 2 October 1989.
[609] Luliński, "Pragmatyczne rozwiązanie problem tysięcy uchodźców".; PAP, "Exodus obywateli NRD". *TL*, Nr. 230, 3 October 1989, 5.
[610] PAP, "12 tys. Uchodźców opuściło Pragę". *TL*, Nr. 232, 5 October 1989, 8.

use of the word "refugee" by the GDR authorities and the Polish press shifted its image as a benevolent political power in the press that was now compromising.

After Dresden, the Polish press openly expressed support for the East German decision to emigrate from the GDR. This can be observed from arguments employed to counter conservative depictions of this migration as a threat to the socialist order. For instance, *GW* reported that before leaving for their trains to the FRG, East German migrants "cleaned the entire area around the Embassy" rather than leaving rubbish around as Czechoslovak news reports had indicated.[611] Against the claim of their alleged "spread of illness", the migrants were depicted as cleansing agents in Prague. Whether locals appreciated this gesture of gratitude was not clear as *TL* claimed that around a thousand of its residents gathered at the train station to wave East Germans "goodbye", "happy" that the "Embassy guests were leaving".[612] As expected, the *TL* rival *Gazeta Wyborcza* published their reporter JJ's observations who argued that local residents of Prague applauded East Germans and "wholeheartedly came to their help, bringing them food, drink and warm clothes" during their stay at the FRG diplomatic mission in the Czechoslovak capital.[613] All Polish newspapers offered contrasting and often politically conditioned depictions of East German migrants. They shared negative representations of the Czechoslovak state and noted the dangers East Germans may have experienced as they tried to reach its West German diplomatic mission, for which they were invariably blamed. How did the Polish press depict this migration in their own capital city?

6. 3. 2. Pride in Warsaw

In stark contrast to the graphic textual depictions of the West German diplomatic mission in Prague as a dirty campground, the FRG Embassy in Warsaw was represented in the Polish press as a clean and orderly place.[614] Constructing a clear-cut distinction between themselves and their Czechoslovak colleagues, Paweł Smoleński described the living conditions for East Germans there in *Gazeta Wyborcza* as "look[ing] as usual".[615] Warsaw's FRG mission was smaller than Prague's and it may have appeared more orderly because the Polish government provided additional accommodation for them in Warsaw's

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[611] Jj, ""POCIĄGI WOLNOŚCI" pod specjalnym nadzorem". *GW*, 4 October 1989.
[612] PAP, "12 tys. uchodźców opuściło Pragę". *TL*, Nr. 232, 5 October 1989, 8.; Marian Kuszewski, "Sprzed ambasady RFN i okolic". *TL*, Nr. 232, 5 October 1989, 8.
[613] Jj, ""POCIĄGI WOLNOŚCI" pod specjalnym nadzorem".
[614] PAP, "Próba znalezienia rozwiązania". *TL*, Nr. 228, 28 September 1989: 1400 people in Prague, 200 in Warsaw.; PAP, "Szturm na ambasadę RFN w Pradze". *TL*, Nr. 231, 4 October 1989, 8.
[615] Paweł Smoleński, "Przez Warszawę do RFN". *GW*, 19 September 1989.

Tarchomin Catholic seminary, as well as hotels and private apartments.[616] The Polish Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki claimed that the new government upheld "the foundations of human rights and support[ed] the understanding reached in Helsinki", which represented the Polish state as eager to seek for alternative solutions to the management of this migration from those employed in Czechoslovakia, and as increasingly unlikely to maintain its agreements with the GDR and send the East German migrants back to the GDR.[617]

The Polish press, unlike their Czechoslovak counterparts, offered statistical information about the East German motivations for emigration. *TL* quoted a FRG poll, claiming that 74% of those East Germans who reached the FRG left because of the "lack of freedom of movement and travel" as their main motivation, 69% adding "lack of future opportunities" and "lack of provisions".[618] Daniel Luliński represented them as professionally trained, well-educated, and mobile young families – their emigration was defined as a "huge loss" to the GDR.[619] *Trybuna Ludu* also visually depicted one of the departures of the migrants in a photograph (Fig. 6-2). It described East Germans as "refugees" at the Gdańsk Railway Station.[620] The photograph depicted passengers

Figure 6-2: "Special trains".
In: "Pociągi specjalne". *TL*, Nr. 233, 6 October 1989, 5.

[616] Ryszard Stefański, "WARSZAWA, dworzec wschodni, godz. 2.54". *GW*, 1 October 1989 .
[617] Daniel Luliński, "Dwugłos Mazowiecki – Genscher". *TL*, Nr. 227, 29 September 1989, 6: Helsinki agreements had, nevertheless, recognized European divisions, demarcations, and the communist rule in the Central European states. See: Kristina Spohr, *Post Wall, Post Square: how Bush, Gorbachev, Kohl, and Deng Shaped the World after 1989*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020, 119.
[618] PAP, "Po otwarciu granicy węgiersko-austriackiej, ponad 13 tys. obywateli NRD przedostało się na Zachód". *TL*, Nr. 215, 15 September 1989, 8.
[619] Daniel Luliński, "Drenaż zawodowy i demograficzny Wschodniej Europy". *TL*, Nr. 224, 25 September 1989, 5.; PAP, "W RFN brak pracy dla przesiedleńców z NRD". *TL*, Nr. 187, 11 August 1989, 4.; Jerzy Weber, "Głód mieszkaniowy – nie do rozwiązania". *TL*, Nr. 249, 25 October 1989, 4.; Maciej Jaranowski, "Pociągi specjalne wyruszyły do RFN". *ŻW*, Nr. 232, 5 October 1989, 4; Urszula Kozierowska, "Nie słabnie fala uchodźców z NRD". *ŻW*, NR. 233, 6 October 1989, 4.
[620] "Pociągi specjalne". *TL*, Nr. 233, 6 October 1989, 5.

looking through the train windows, and others queuing on the platform with children and bags, waiting to board it, a visual not dissimilar to those published in the Czechoslovak press. Olena Skwiecińska in *Gazeta Wyborcza* called the bags and suitcases they were depicted as carrying "a hallmark of emigration", thus, the photograph was potentially comparable to the visual representations of other migrants both compositionally and discursively if the essentialist argument regarding "refugee" aesthetics could be at all followed.[621] It could be argued that *TL*, as PZPR's newspaper, attempted to assert its position as a reformed daily that claimed to have acknowledged East German migrants as individuals with personal aspirations and agency, and depicted them in the news reports as "refugees". The use of this term contrasted with their hardline, non-reformist colleagues and allies in the GDR and Czechoslovakia as their governments shunned this label. Statistical information used here also contradicted previous representations of the migrants as vagrants or people "with an obscure past", a depictions which implied criminality to sow doubt among those supporting their emigration.

Detailing the drama of personal lives and secrecy at the Embassy in Warsaw via interviews with local police officers, residents, and East Germans themselves, a *GW* reporter Paweł Smoleński wrote that "the Embassy fence" was "an effective barrier of information leakage" but East German children there spoke to everyone "about the number of refugees and about the help of the Red Cross."[622] Although both Embassy boundaries were more important to migrants than "the Wall", in comparison to Prague's FRG Embassy fence, which was depicted as a dangerous boundary between freedom and captivity, the Warsaw mission's boundary was represented as a porous construction. Smoleński also spoke to a girl who did not reveal her name because she claimed to have been "afraid this will hurt [her] parents. I want to leave in order to live."[623] The interviewee's reply revealed the troubling lives of East German families, withholding information from those asking and interested who could get their story across the world and help them to emigrate west quicker, which attested to the international reach of the GDR authorities and its Stasi agents, finding its subjects in neighbourly socialist states.[624]

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[621] Olena Skwiecińska, "KARNAWAŁ NA MURZE". *GW*, 12 November 1989.
[622] Paweł Smoleński, "Przez Warszawę do RFN". *GW*, 19 September 1989.
[623] Ibid.
[624] This correlates with a few of the *AP* reports that claimed East Germans were scared they could be found in Budapest, Prague, and Warsaw by the Stasi agents and returned back to the GDR (discussed in chapter 4).

The migrants' place of shelter in Warsaw, then, was represented in the Polish press as an orderly and safe institution that protected East Germans from their own government.

Similarly to the Czechoslovak press, the local Warsaw newspaper *Życie Warszawy* offered a typical visual representation of the East German migration through pictures of their vehicles (Fig. 6-3). Contrary to similar Czechoslovak news reports, the one that

Figure 6-3: "Cars with the GDR registration plates, left at the Embassy of the FRG in Warsaw".
By Zdzisław Kwilecki
In: PAP, "NRD-owcy nadal opuszczają ojczyznę". *ŻW*, Nr. 235, 9 October 1989, 6.

accompanied the photograph by Zdzisław Kwilecki, entitled "Cars with GDR registration plates, left at the Embassy of the FRG in Warsaw", did not discuss the vehicles. Instead, it reported that the migrants left Warsaw. Similarly to the reporting on this topic in English and Czech language press, traces of their migration lingered in their transit places in Warsaw (and Prague) as the Polish press praised the calm that had finally returned to Warsaw's Saska Kępa.[625] Instead of detailing various things they left behind, however, Polish journalists reported on their gratitude to locals who helped them. Wojciech Pomianowski wrote in *ŻW* that over 800 East Germans at a train station in Warsaw thanked the Polish authorities and locals for their support.[626] Those East Germans were defined as "strangers" (*obcy*) by a FRG diplomat, and depicted them as unknown to Warsaw residents, which in turn represented the Polish politicians and locals as even more praiseworthy for helping them.[627] *GW* also interviewed a local resident who expressed their sympathy for the migrants: "I see them when I do something in the backyard. Poor people. I feel sorry for the children the most. They are pulled [over the Embassy fences] by other [local] children, and then their parents scream and pull them back down. They

[625] Wojciech Wasilewski, "Spokój wraca na Malą Stranę". *ŻW*. Nr. 234. 7-8 October 1989, 6.
[626] Wojciech Pomianowski, "Nie słabnie fala uchodźców z NRD". *ŻW*, NR. 233, 6 October 1989, 4.
[627] "Uchodźcy z NRD nadal napływają do Warszawy". *ŻW*, Nr. 236, 10 October 1989, 4.; PAP, "2 tys. obywateli NRD oczekuje na wyjazd z Polski do RFN". *ŻW*, Nr. 250, 26 October 1989, 6.

are probably afraid that someone will kidnap the children and they [parents] will have to leave the Embassy."[628] In contrast to the environment around the Prague's West German Embassy, it was not the local militiamen pulling East German children over the Embassy fence, unlike their colleagues in Prague, but other children, potentially wanting to play with them.[629] Locals helped East Germans, and expressed both hospitality and solidarity towards them. Reports on assistance also helped shape the image of the new Polish government and society as welcoming and supportive of individuals fighting for freedom and liberty – not only their own but others', too.

Much of the Polish coverage of the East German migration represented the Czechoslovak and East German communist authorities as inflexible and non-reformist. *GW* reported an interview with a local Pole who suggested that "they [Polish authorities] should give them [East German migrants] planes. Or open the border, just like the Hungarians. But they [migrants] will not go to Czechoslovakia because communism there is even worse."[630] Here, a gradation of "communisms" was visible. Hungary was praised for providing "freedom" to the migrants by opening its borders, while Czechoslovakia's communism was "even worse" than in Hungary or Poland. It was important to lead the way in the East German migration management in practice. As the 17th of October news reports claimed, East Germans in Warsaw were allowed to renounce their "GDR citizenship" at the GDR Embassy before travelling to the FRG diplomatic mission for West German passports.[631] *GW* reported that the "refugees from the GDR" were flown by the Polish company LOT to West Germany.[632] The usually conservative *TL* published its first interview with the "refugees from the GDR": an unidentified person claimed that "they [the GDR Embassy officials] treated us kindly, business-like. […] This is the first time we were treated this way."[633] This type of information was rare in the pages of *TL*: the decision to interview an East German claiming that they had a pleasant experience

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[628] Paweł Smoleński, "Przez Warszawę do RFN". *GW*, 19 September 1989.
[629] Ibid.
[630] Ibid.
[631] "Pierwsza grupa uchodźców z NRD otrzymała zgodę na legalny wyjazd z Polski". *TL*, Nr. 242, 17 October 1989, 5.; "Trwa exodus obywateli NRD". *TL*, Nr. 248, 24 October 1989, 5.; PAP, "Kolejni uchodźcy z NRD dotarli do RFN". *ŻW*, Nr. 245, 20 October 1989, 4: adopted in Prague later.; PAP. "Uchodźcy z NRD rezygnują z obywatelstva". *ŻW*, Nr. 242, 17 October 1989, 1.
[632] Jj, "Statkiem lub samolotem". *GW*, 15 October 1989.; Jj, "Ambasada NRD w Warszawie: dokumenty na wyjazd". *GW*, 16 October 1989.; Jj, W, "Gdy się o pewnych sprawach mówi, to im się szkodzi". *GW*, 17 October 1989.
[633] "Pierwsza grupa uchodźców z NRD otrzymała zgodę na legalny wyjazd z Polski". *TL*, Nr. 242, 17 October 1989, 5.; PAP, "Kolejna grupa uchodźców z NRD opuściła Warszawę". *TL*, Nr. 245, 20 October 1989, 6.

with the representatives of their socialist government was damaging to the GDR authorities.[634] Additionally, the PZPR daily also openly identified "the freedom of press, demonstrations, travel and the abolition of legal regulations that allow for punitive actions" related to it as proposed changes to the GDR by the East German migrants, which also closely resembled the demands of the state's oppositional associations.[635] These depictions portrayed this migration as constructed as "illegal" by the GDR politicians via the focus on those contesting its rule: migrants and the opposition.[636] What is more, migration reports of and from Prague and Warsaw's West German Embassies also drew sharp contrast between the treatment of the migrants in Poland and in Czechoslovakia, suggesting the latter's political system was unsustainable without change as well. What type of migration narratives conceptualised this migration in the Polish press?

6. 4. Migration narratives in the Polish language press

The essence of the 1989 East German migration was aptly captured by Paweł Smoleński in the 19th of September issue of *Gazeta Wyborcza*: "They [East German migrants] were born in the German Democratic Republic, want to live in the Federal Republic of Germany, and chose the help of the FRG Embassy in Warsaw as a way to achieve their dream goal."[637] This observation revealed that emigrating East Germans were generally younger than 50-years-old, had a wish to live elsewhere than in the place of their birth or legal residence, and sought assistance from West German Embassies in Warsaw and Prague, identified as "help", to do it. Despite such a simple explanation, the migration coverage in the selected Polish press were much more complex, as its narratives and migrant identity representations attested to. It is important to note that during this migration, the Polish press depictions of the migrants became similar and united rather than remaining varied because a liberal democratic political and ideological rhetoric was taking shape in the country. What started as a chaotic coverage in terms of representations employed to define the migrating East Germans ended as an overall supportive and sympathetic media story about them. In this sense, the Polish migration coverage is similar to the international English language reporting.

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[634] PAP, "Fala uchodźców z NRD wcale nie opada". *TL*, Nr. 235, 9 October 1989, 5.
[635] Ibid.; PAP, "Wezwanie do powszechnego dialogu". *TL*, Nr. 238, 12 October 1989, 5.; Jerzy Weber, "Hermann Kant krytykuje". *TL*, Nr. 236, 10 October 1989, 5.
[636] PAP, "Przywódca NRD o problemach kraju". *TL*, Nr. 245, 20 October 1989, 6.; E. Kieszkowski, PAP, "Pierwsze oznaki zmian". *TL*, Nr. 246, 21-22 October 1989, 9.
[637] Paweł Smoleński, "Przez Warszawę do RFN". *GW*, 19 September 1989.

The Polish press produced several distinct conceptualisations of the East German migration process which articulated the migrants' "familiarity" to the Polish readers. The first, found in the Czech and English language news as well, referred to East Germans as threatening "anti-GDR propaganda weapons" or tools of the FRG revanchist conquest over the GDR by the Nazi-like territorial expansion eastward as in 1937. The Polish government was more sensitive to any discussions that could question their (western) borders, and the "dreaded German reunification" narrative was perpetuated in the Polish press more vehemently than in the Czechoslovak news. The "familiarity" of the migrants was perceived negatively in this story – East German migrants were (or related to) "familiar" foes who did not deserve support in their cause. The second migration narrative of "reform" could also be found in the Czechoslovak press but the Polish press was more critical of the GDR authorities' misgovernance of East Germany. East Germans were depicted as victims of the regime who were bringing about necessary change to its politics. Represented as positively "familiar" to the Polish readers, East Germans were defined as having the right to emigrate. Finally, the third narrative of "resistance" Polish journalists adopted was a tale of dissent against the GDR state's restrictions imposed on its population. In this case, the "familiarity" of East Germans who came to Warsaw was both celebrated and cautioned. Migrants were depicted as individuals who fought for their freedom under a dictatorship and also as misguided in choosing emigration – demonstrations were considered a more effective means of protest. The Polish press migration narratives were similar to the stories found in the Czechoslovak newspapers, but they diverged from them by being outspoken and liberal in the views they expressed. In this respect, some of the rhetoric regarding this migration in the Polish language news could be also compared to the English language press reports on the topic.

6. 4. 1. Reunification: migrants as threat

The Polish press reprinted East German press agency's ADN reports, also published in the Czechoslovak newspapers, claiming the East German migration was part of the West German strategy to depopulate their socialist neighbour in order to weaken the state and absorb its territory. One of the first reports on the East German migration in *Życie Warsawy*, by the journalist Urszula Kozierowska, summed up the view of the GDR Ministry of Foreign Affairs' spokesman Denis Ruh, protesting against the alleged interference of the FRG diplomatic missions in GDR affairs by accommodating "citizens

of the GDR" in the FRG Embassy in Budapest.[638] Later news reports explained that the culprits behind this "loud campaign" were the FRG's right-wing politicians and the media.[639] Allegedly, their aim was the "re-establishment of the [Third] Reich within its 1937 borders" because the FRG politicians still harboured "revanchist" feelings over the Nazi Germany defeat during the Second World War.[640] Helping East Germans or otherwise accommodating their migration would mean to enable the repetition of traumatic past events, the narrative implied.

The fear (and fearmongering) of a German reunification could have also meant potential loss of Polish residents and their economic contributions, as the argument went in the Polish press. This narrative acted as a template for representing this migration as a threat to the Polish political integrity and sovereignty.[641] Jerzy Weber argued in *Trybuna Ludu* that the ruling East German communist party SED could not easily reform its socialist system because unlike in Poland, where the PZPR was allegedly "renewing" its ideology, no "crisis and mass departures" ever "influence[d] speculations about the possible liquidation of our state."[642] Weber referred to the view that the GDR state lacked distinct historical roots and derived its identity solely from the existence of another German state. The argument claimed that a potential reunification would happen on the terms of an economically stronger and better internationally supported West Germany because its politicians harboured territorial revanchist dreams of regaining its former territories given to Poland upon the 1945 Yalta and Potsdam agreements.[643] Daniel Luliński wrote in *TL* that there were allegedly "from 750,000 to 1,1 million Germans in the "Polish territories of governance" yet the "FRG does not recognise western and northern Polish borders", which could create a popular pretext for the reunified Germany

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[638] Urszula Kozierowska, "Przez Budapeszt nad Ren?". *ŻW*, Nr. 185, 9 August 1989, 4.; Urszula Kozierowska, "Kolejne reakcje w NRD". *ŻW*, Nr. 187, 11 August 1989, 4.; Urszula Kozierowska, "Prywatne ponowne zjednoczenie?". *ŻW*, Nr. 188, 12-13 August 1989, 6.; Jerzy Weber, "Uciekinierzy – wewnętrzną sprawą NRD". *TL*, Nr. 207, 6 September 1989, 6.
[639] Kozierowska, "Kolejne reakcje w NRD".; Kozierowska, "Prywatne ponowne zjednoczenie?".
[640] Ibid.; Ol, "Uchodźcy". *GW*, 8 August 1989.; PAP, "Uciekinierzy z NRD nadal w przedstawicielstwach RFN w Budapeszcie, Berlinie, Pradze i Warszawie". *ŻW*, Nr. 189, 14 August, 4.
[641] "Obraz tygodnia". *TP*, Nr. 44 (2105), 29 October 1989, 1.
[642] Jerzy Weber, "Ucieczki obywateli NRD. Rzeczywistość bardziej złożona". *TL*, Nr. 225, 27 September 1989, 4.
[643] Potsdam Agreement, Protocol of the Proceedings, August l, 1945: Part VII on Poland, paragraph B, https://www.nato.int/ebookshop/video/declassified/doc_files/Potsdam%20Agreement.pdf, (accessed: 2 March 2021).

to claim those territories back.[644] The western Polish borders, then, were a part of a diplomatic problem followed by no direct peace settlements signed between the Polish and German states until 1990. This fact and the narrative that used it regardless of West German politicians' claims that only those on the ideological right-wing fringes campaigned for it provided fuel for the anti-German sentiments in the Polish press which were discursively directed at the East German migrants. Their emigration (and freedom) was a warning of the rise of a strong, united Germany, which revitalised its anti-Polishness at the time of its fragile democratic transition.[645]

The following changes of German borders attest to the strength of this narrative as well as it was directly connected with the East German migration in the Polish press. Jerzy Weber argued in *TL* after the opening of "the Berlin Wall" that "those citizens of the GDR who want to leave the GDR permanently do not have to look for ways to do so through Czechoslovakia, Hungary, or Poland."[646] Günter Schabowski, the SED Berlin party chief and the Party's spokesman, himself explained that the "decision was taken in order to avoid any further increase of tensions with other countries", such as Czechoslovakia and Poland due to the emigration of East Germans.[647] Upon the news of the opening of "the Wall", the Polish leadership issued a cautious statement in which it "support[ed] every nation's right to self-determination" but sought "guarantees that the new German state will not be a threat to European security and cooperation" and would "reunify only on its own territory".[648] Although Jerzy Weber identified this migration in *TL* as a "massive movement of freedom", the fact that it was a German freedom was

[644] Daniel Luliński, "Drenaż zawodowy i demograficzny Wschodniej Europy". *TL*, Nr. 224, 25 September 1989, 5.; K.S.,"Aby granice łączyły narody". *GW*, 6 November 1989.; Daniel Luliński, "W RFN o uchodźcach zza Łaby- fanfary, kłopoty i przestrogi polityków". *TL*, Nr. 213, 13 September 1989, 8.; Daniel Luliński, "Druga strona medalu". *TL*, Nr. 236, 10 October 1989, 5.; PAP, DPA, "Kolejni uchodźcy z NRD przybywają do RFN". *TL*, Nr. 240, 14-15 October 1989, 5.
[645] Jerzy Holzer, "Polacy i Niemcy po drugiej wojnie światowej". *TP*, Nr. 29 (2090), 16 July 1989, 3.; "Obraz tygodnia". *TP*, Nr. 44 (2105), 29 October 1989, 1.
[646] Jerzy Weber, "Władze NRD otwordzyły granice". *TL*, Nr. 262, 10-12 November 1989, 1.; PAP, "NRD otwiera granice". *ŻW*, Nr. 262, 10-11-12 November 1989, 1.; "Obraz tygodnia". *TP*, Nr. 47 (2108), 19 November 1989, 1.; Olena Skwiecińska, "KARNAWAŁ NA MURZE". *GW*, 12 November 1989.
[647] Weber, "Władze NRD otworzyły granice". *TL*, Nr. 262, 10-12 November 1989, 1.; PAP, "NRD otwiera granice". *ŻW*, Nr. 262, 10-11-12 November 1989, 1.
[648] PAP, "Stanowiska rządu polskiego". *TL*, Nr. 263, 13 November 1989, 6.; In this sense, some of the first Polish press reports of the 9 November events at the Berlin Wall resembled the Czechoslovak press response (apart from *Svobodné Slovo*).

unsettling to those who followed dominant nationalist historical narratives of the Second World War or experienced its violence and trauma.[649]

The Polish press debated whether the Poles and Germans remained historical enemies in 1989. Jerzy Holzer's essay in *Tygodnik Powszechny* explained how historical arguments found their way into the East German migration coverage very well. He claimed that the discursive trope of the "German scarecrow" or "bogeyman" [*straszak niemiecki*] had persistently haunted the interpretations of the Polish-German relations even in 1989.[650] Holzer claimed that this trope "became the main instrument for integrating the civil society" of Poland into the Soviet allied system because the "hatred towards Germans" heavily influenced the popular fervour for their expulsions from "regained" north-west territories following the Second World War and mixed with persisting and perpetuated fear of them and their return.[651] Holzer argued that even "those resistant to communist indoctrination treated the sovietisation of the GDR as a well-deserved punishment and a way of liquidation of the remnants of the national-socialism", which allowed both the Soviet and Polish propagandists to exploit the trope of "*straszak niemiecki*", while the idea of an "enemy" in West Germany strengthened the need for the Soviet-adjacent and socialist order in Poland.[652] The representations that depicted (East) German migrants as a threat in the Polish discourse had deep historical roots. In the context of the 1989 East German migration, the migrants were considered in this narrative as worthy of the difficulties and privations that befell them for which only the right-wing circles in West Germany carried any responsibility.

The cross-border travel and migration throughout the Cold War between Poland and both German states challenged the stereotypes perpetuated about "the Germans".[653] Polish and German residents had more opportunities to get to know each other and familiarise themselves better through travels and emigrations for shopping, marriages, or

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[649] Jerzy Weber, "Władze NRD otworzyły granice". *TL*, Nr. 262, 10-12 November 1989, 1.; Weber, J. "Maleje uchodźtwo z NRD". *TL*, Nr. 264, 14 November 1989, 6.; Daniel Luliński, "Bonn zapowiada znaczną pomoc gospodarczą". *TL*, Nr. 263, 13 November 1989, 6.; Urszula Kozierowska, "Po obu stronach". *ŻW*, Nr. 263, 13 November 1989, 1, 6.; "Postawy Polakow wobec Niemcow". *TL*, Nr. 265, 15 November 1989.; W. M. "My się Niemców nie boimy". *GW*, 14 November 1989: people over 50 who were unenthusiastic about the German reunification and considered it as unfavourable for Europe (1987 – 57%, 1989 – 41%) and for Poland (59 and 45%, respectively); Janusz Jankowiak, "Klucz do Niemiec – Klucz do Europy". *GW*, 14 November 1989.

[650] Jerzy Holzer, "Polacy i Niemcy po drugiej wojnie światowej". *TP*, Nr. 29 (2090), 16 July 1989, 3.

[651] Ibid.

[652] Ibid.

[653] Holzer, "Polacy i Niemcy po drugiej wojnie światowej": national stereotypes of Germans as "waring and ruthless Prussians", "unkind Germans", as well as "drunk and lazy Poles"

work.[654] The issue of anti-German moods in Poland was also directly addressed in *Tygodnik Powszechny* by Konrad Weiß. He claimed to understand the "Polish neighbour" looking at the events of the 9th of November "somehow with reservation, suspiciously. [But] there was no Führer [at the Berlin Wall] we all could follow, and instead of the steps of marching soldiers, there was dance".[655] This *TP* essay was important as it did not reject the validity of fears in Poland over how the new Polish-German future might develop and also attempted to pacify the outcry of anxiety, visible in the Polish press.[656] Weiß acknowledged that emigrations and border changes raised other people's anxieties as well – border guards who would be left out of a job, victims of violence at the border who would expect reparations in any form, ordinary Germans on both sides of "the Wall" who themselves developed "the Wall" in their heads and saw this division as natural, or even political leaders around the world, many of whom justified their political orders and actions with the existence of this construction. The future was unknown, the East German emigration brought it closer, but hope that it would only lead to a positive outcome governed this and similar views.

6. 4. 2. Reform: migrants as change-makers

Comfortable and clear-cut black-and-white narratives of the past about eternal victims and perpetrators could not explain the dizzying new reality which developed before the eyes of the Polish and Czechoslovak populations, as well as "the Germans".[657] The narrative of *perestroika* and reforms exemplified this struggle to imagine potential changes this migration brought to the political order in Europe. The Polish press had voiced criticism regarding the official anti-emigration statements coming from the GDR, which demonstrated the shifting ideological terrain of the Polish political thought in the new government, including its communist party representatives who sought to position themselves as reform-minded socialists and social democrats.[658] For instance, instead of agreeing or adding to the statement by Wolfgang Meyer, spokesman of the GDR, claiming the FRG led a "rampant, slanderous attack on the GDR", Jerzy Weber reported in *TL* on the anti-governmental demonstrations in Leipzig, where about 1000 people

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[654] Ibid.
[655] Konrad Weiß, (tr. by Tomasz Fiałkowski) "Pierwsza noc pokoju". *TP*, Nr. 47 (2108), 19 November 1989, 2.
[656] Zygmunt Słomkowski, "Nadzieje i pytania". *TL*, Nr. 263, 13 November 1989, 5.; Weber, "Władze NRD otworzyły granice".; Weber, "Granice NRD otwarte dla obywateli".
[657] Kozierowska, "Po obu stronach". *ŻW*, Nr. 263, 13 November 1989, 1, 6.; Skwiecińska, "KARNAWAŁ NA MURZE". *GW*, 12 November 1989.
[658] Weber, "Uciekinierzy – wewnętrzną sprawą NRD". *TL*, Nr. 207, 6 September 1989, 6.

"asked to be allowed to go abroad" and enjoy "freedom of speech and assembly".[659] *TL* claimed that many more wished to follow in the migrants' footsteps in protest against the GDR's lack of reforms.[660] Refuting the "dreaded reunification" narrative, Weber argued that "West German propaganda was not the main factor" in emigration but rather the lack of liberalisation in the GDR was to blame.[661] *Życie Warszawy* similarly changed its approach and claimed that the East German migration had its "origins in restricted travel" regulations in the GDR.[662] Writing for *ŻW*, Wojciech Pomianowski argued that the GDR was "built in the Prussian tradition" as a "supervisory state" that used a "system of control and self-control" to hunt down anyone who "escaped that control", but as Gorbachev's *glasnost* invited more criticism and freedom of speech into socialist worldviews, its leadership was experiencing "a crisis of real post-Stalinist socialism" in 1989.[663] This narrative did not afford agency to the migrants, yet more adamantly criticised the GDR government, not the FRG, as responsible for the mass emigration of its residents.

Border openings were one of the first East German migration narrative parts which received the treatment of the "reform" narrative. The official opening of the Hungarian-Austrian border and permission for East Germans to emigrate was also not conceptualised in *Trybuna Ludu* and *Życie Warszawy* in terms used by the GDR authorities, like most of the selected Czechoslovak press accounts.[664] The dailies reported that the Hungarian authorities were forced to take matters into their own hands to allow "the citizens of the GDR to travel to any country which is willing to take them in".[665] Instead of reprinting the statements of the GDR leaders, *TL* published the explanation of the Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs Gyula Horn, who argued that "we live in times when our

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[659] Ibid.
[660] PAP, "Kwestia uchodźów z NRD". *TL*, Nr. 209, 8 September 1989, 4.; PAP, "Problem uchodźców z NRD". *TL*, Nr. 210, 8-9 September 1989, 9.
[661] Jerzy Weber, ""Neues Deutschland": wydarzenie bez precedensu". *TL*, Nr. 213, 13 September 1989, 8.; PAP, "W NRD o uciekinierach do RFN. Społeczeństwo żąda ujawnienia prawdy". *TL*, Nr. 227, 29 September 1989, 6.; Urszula Kozierowska, "Trwa exodus obywateli NRD". *ŻW*, Nr. 230, 3 October 1989, 4.
[662] Jerzy Weber, "Ucieczki obywateli NRD. Rzeczywistość bardziej złożona". *TL*, Nr. 225, 27 September 1989, 4.; Urszula Kozierowska, "Przez Budapeszt nad Ren?". *ŻW*, Nr. 185, 9 August 1989, 4.; PAP, "Uciekinierzy z NRD nadal w przedstawicielstwach RFN w Budapeszcie, Berlinie, Pradze i Warszawie". *ŻW*, Nr. 189, 14 August, 4.
[663] PAP, "Liczba emigrantów zbliża się do 50 tys.". *ŻW*, Nr. 244, 19 October 1989, 4.; Wojciech Pomianowski, "Zmiana czy zamiana?". *ŻW*, Nr. 245, 20 October 1989, 5.
[664] PAP, "Obywatele NRD opuszczają Węgry". *TL*, Nr. 212, 12 September 1989, 6.; Grzegorz Lubczyk, "Około 7 tys. uchodźców z NRD przekroczyło w ooniedzialek granicę węgiersko-austriacką". *ŻW*, Nr. 212, 12 September 1989, 1, 4.; "Granica stoi otworem". *GW*, 10 September 1989.
[665] PAP, "Oświadczenia rządu WRL dotyczące uchodźców z NRD". *TL*, Nr. 211, 11 September 1989, 6.; PAP, MTI, "Oświadczenie rządu WRL. Obywatele NRD mogą bez przeszkód opuścić Węgry". *ŻW*, Nr. 211, 11 September 1989, 6.

understanding of events in our country irritates many people, including our neighbours and allies" but "we cannot change our politics solely because they are displeased".[666] The daily also challenged the press agency ADN's explanation of this migration, defined as an "illegal" and "long and carefully planned operation 'Night and Fog'".[667] It is important to note the use of the term in this migration narrative related to how the Nazi German authorities in the 1930s and 1940s brutally suppressed its opposition, including socialists, and others otherwise regarded as inferior to them – by disappearing, torturing, and murdering them. By using this media template, the GDR authorities compared these practices with the West German ones in 1989, trivialised their actual consequences and depicted themselves as anti-fascist in the hopes of communicating a concern for their own future should their predicted conspiracy of an aggressive reunification of Germany under the FRG ruled come to fruition. In *Życie Warszawy,* Jaranowski refuted this narrative when he noted that the negotiations regarding the Hungarian border opening were neither conducted in secret nor were the borders opened "in night and fog", as was suggested, but rather enjoyed a significant international publicity and praise.[668] By publishing these counter-arguments, the Polish press offered a more balanced interpretation and pluralist narrative of this migration than their Czechoslovak colleagues, and demonstrated the ways *TL* and *ŻW* established themselves as supporters of socialist reforms rather than of "real post-Stalinist socialism".

It could be argued that shifting interpretations of the East German migration were tied to the changing political context in Poland in the summer and autumn of 1989 as well as rethinking of its immediate and earlier history since 1940s. As much as it was important to distance oneself from fascism following the end of the Second World War, so it was necessary to establish oneself at least as a socialist reformer if not a liberal democrat at the end of one-party state-socialist Poland. Following state-supplied narratives of the coming of the new Third Reich in the form of a West-East German reunification may have been considered counter-intuitive of the new coalitional government's oppositional credentials over the past twenty years because, as Tony Judt stated, censorship, shortages,

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[666] Ibid.; Lubczyk, "Około 7 tys. uchodźców z NRD przekroczyło w poniedzialek granicę węgiersko-austriacką".; "Granica Stoi Otworem", GW, 10 September 1989.
[667] PAP, "Obywatele NRD opuszczają Węgry". *TL*, Nr. 212, 12 September 1989, 6.; intertextual and intermedial argument: *Night and Fog* (1956) was also a documentary by Resnais, claiming the inmates at the concentration camps arrived at night and in fog. It was also Hitler's directive against political dissent, Nacht und Nebel.
[668] PAP, "20,000 uchodźców z NRD przybyło z Węgier do Austrii". *ŻW*, Nr. 223, 25 September 1989, 6.; "Obchody 40-lecia NRD". *ŻW*, Nr. 234, 7-8 October 1989, 6.; Maciej Jaranowski, "RFN oczekuje 10 tys. uchodźców z NRD". *ŻW*, Nr. 212, 12 September 1989, 4.

repressions, and martial law of the post-war period in state-socialist countries had been a part of a "permanent warfare [communist parties waged] upon their own societies".[669] The resurfaced discussions on the Polish-German past and future reevaluated Poland's relations with both iterations of the German state. *Tygodnik Powszechny's* Jerzy Surdykowski and Piotr Wandycz attempted to de-mystify "the German bogeyman" in the Polish collective imagination.[670] Surdykowski argued for the de-nationalisation of the memory of the Second World War, by reconsidering it as an international and European conflict.[671] Wandycz claimed that historically, every European nation acted in their own self-interests, even Poland, which undeservingly had assumed the role of a historical victim.[672] Surdykowski claimed that "there is no nation of such permanently bad character [like Germany], just as there are no chosen nations [like Poland]", and argued against the misleading stereotype regarding the Polish and German national characteristics throughout history.[673] This view contributed to Głowiński, Porter-Szűcs, and Głowacka-Grajper's observations regarding the construction and functioning of post-war collective memory in Poland by designating enemies that help unite the population. However, Surdykowski also criticised the FRG leaders for their reluctance to reaffirm clearly that they had no interest in the Polish territories past the river Oder, which fuelled anti-German sentiments in Eastern Europe and made the migrants, albeit "involuntarily", into "invaluable collaborators in this propaganda".[674] Wandycz and Surdykowski concluded that mutual history, future ventures, and common goals united the Polish and German nations despite their tumultuous past and its stereotypical imaginings.[675] They agreed that history would not and could not be repeated in 1989.

6. 4. 3. Resistance: migrants as un/patriotic heroes

The East German migration was also conceptualised in oppositional and critical newspapers, such as in *Gazeta Wyborcza* and *Tygodnik Powszechny*, as an act of political resistance against the GDR state-socialist establishment. The Polish story differed from the one found in the *AP* with its evaluation of this emigration as mode of resistance. Known for representing the Polish opposition and dissident circles, *Gazeta Wyborcza*

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[669] Tony Judt, *Postwar: a History of Europe since 1945*, New York: Penguin Press, 2005, 750.
[670] Jerzy Surdykowski, "Porozmawiajmy o Niemczech". *TP*, Nr. 40 (2101), 1 October 1989, 1.; Piotr Wandycz, "O Niemczech trochę inaczej". *TP*, Nr. 46 (2109), 26 November 1989, 1, 7.
[671] Ibid.
[672] Wandycz, "O Niemczech trochę inaczej", 7.
[673] Surdykowski, "Porozmawiajmy o Niemczech".
[674] Ibid: exact phrase used – nieocenieni współpracownicy tej propagandy.
[675] Ibid., 7; Wandycz, "O Niemczech trochę inaczej", 7.

represented the East German migrants as unpatriotic and resigned individuals who chose an easier way out from the rigid communist regime in the GDR, and betrayed their identities.[676] Piotr Bikont wrote that while "one thought, one desire" dominated in the GDR – "to get out of here" – "one gets the impression that they [emigrants] do not even want to change anything here in East Germany".[677] Emigration was portrayed as a weakness in comparison to protests and migrants were described as disinterested in changing the state from within.[678] Janusz Reiter, a "Solidarność" activist, editor of the newspaper *Życie Warszawy*, and later Poland's ambassador to Germany, argued in *GW* that emigration unnecessarily divided the East German governmental opposition whose members organised local protests which was "skilfully exploited" by the GDR communist party.[679] This split lent its orthodox leadership legitimacy for keeping the state-socialist regime in the GDR as unchanged as possible and conceptualised the state as a political space that "can only be socialist" as defined by the SED.[680] In this narrative, East Germans were depicted as both positively and negatively "familiar" to the Polish readers – the migrants were to be welcomed in Poland but caution was advised due to the political uncertainty their migration had introduced in the European Cold War order. Their emigration, while a valid mode of protest, was not a preferable solution to achieve the change certain groups of political activists in the Polish opposition imagined for the GDR state.

One of the values of this narrative was "staying and fighting" for freedom rather than succumbing to emigration. It is possible that this view was self-applied in Polish opposition circles following the suppression of popular protests against the PZPR in the 1970s and early 1980s, and it may have been a moral benchmark applied to East Germans in 1989, especially because the GDR had functioning independent opposition associations.[681] The most notable of them was the "New Forum" (*Neues Forum*) which, ironically, was permitted to operate on the day Hungary officially opened its borders with Austria in September. *TP* reported the division between the "exit" and "voice" in the GDR as "participants [of many demonstrations in the GDR] asked for democratic changes by staying in the country" and "crowds of the GDR citizens" doubted the effectiveness of

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[676] "Ponad berlinskim murem". *GW*, 28 May 1989.; Piotr Bikont, "Mur się wali". *GW*, 24 July 1989.; Poles support GDR opposition, i. e. Ahe, "Mur przeciw murowi". *GW*, 5 October 1989.
[677] Bikont, "Mur się wali".; Grzegorz Ziętkiewicz, "Na co dzień i od święta". *GW*, 16 June 1989.
[678] Janusz Reiter, "Ma się tylko jedno życie". *GW*, 10 October 1989.
[679] Ibid.
[680] Ibid.
[681] Mm, "Zostać i walczyć". *GW*, 12 September 1989.

such civic acts of disobedience and "tried to get on the trains leaving for the FRG Embassies" in Prague and Warsaw.[682] Many of the members of independent associations in the GDR, to varying degrees, interpreted this emigration in 1989 as anything but a contribution to the greater collective good as they envisioned it – reforming the socialist German state into a more liberal but still socialist entity.[683] Those staying in the GDR and "fighting" for its reform were thought to have instigated a revolution akin to the Great October Socialist Revolution of 1917 in Andrzej Czarnecki's report for *TP* since a lot of the members of the GDR opposition circles were left-leaning and aimed for the GDR to become a socialist democracy. Czarnecki praised the events in the GDR, instigated by "New Forum" and similar organisations, as revolutionary for its potential ability of changing not only the political system of the GDR but also the social consciousness of its residents.[684] Czarnecki quoted an idealist activist Baerbel Bohley, one of the leaders of the "New Forum", who reasoned that "the West will take advantage of emigrants for electoral gains and use it as leverage against the GDR", which would rob the state's civic society of their "own personal *perestroika* and *glasnost*".[685] After witnessing changes in East Germany and speaking to East German activists, Timothy Garton Ash has concluded similarly that East German dissidents "did not want reunification" the emigration was bringing closer.[686] According to him, they were fearful that if the emigration leads to reunification, that would mean that the decades spent building a socialist East Germany were wasted.[687]

It was not difficult to grasp that "exit" have had weakened "voice" throughout the existence of the GDR state and "those left behind suffered enormous pangs of self-doubt when fellow fighters abandoned the cause", as Patrick Major put it.[688] Emigration was a tarnished mode of protest in East Germany because it was co-opted by the government. As Czarnecki explained in *TP*, the anti-emigrationist stance of those organisations had its roots in the GDR governmental practices of forced deportations of its loudest critics to

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[682] "Obraz tygodnia". *TP*, Nr. 42 (2103), 15 October 1989, 1.; Andrzej Czarnecki, "Niemiecki październik". *TP*, Nr. 45 (2106), 5 November 1989, 2.
[683] "Obraz tygodnia". *TP*, Nr. 42 (2103), 15 October 1989, 1.
[684] Czarnecki, "Niemiecki październik": Rewolucja październikowa is the Polish term for the October revolution of 1917 when the Bolsheviks seized power in Russia. The news headline implied that what was happening in East Germany in 1989 was the "German October", an upheaval not dissimilar to the October revolution in its social scale (a popular upheaval) and impact (a significant change, a revolution).
[685] Czarnecki, "Niemiecki październik": quoted "Grenzfall", Nr. I-XII, 88.
[686] Timothy Garton Ash, *The Magic Lantern: the Revolution of '89*, London: Atlantic Books, 2019 [1990], 58.
[687] Ibid, 59.
[688] Patrick Major, Behind the Berlin Wall: East Germany and the Frontiers of Power. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010, 221.

West Germany.[689] Krystyna Grzybowska wrote in *GW* that the FRG government spent "around 40 million marks" as "ransom money" for the GDR's "troublemakers".[690] Indeed, Mary Elise Sarotte found that during 1963-1989 alone, the GDR ransomed 33,000 East Germans, paid for mostly in foreign loans.[691] This meant that the GDR dictatorship was propped up by the FRG state whose leaders welcomed East German emigrants for decades and used this act to signal virtue and moral superiority over their eastern counterparts. Emigration was seen as a form of resistance to the GDR regime that was politically divisive, unpatriotic, and detrimental for the long-term goals of the anti-governmental movements and their vision of a reformed, socialist East Germany.[692] Despite being depicted in the Polish press as a contributor to the democratisation efforts in the GDR, the East German migration west in 1989 was stigmatised by Polish and East German members and supporters of independent initiatives as a less meaningful and potentially dangerous act of resistance.

This narrative branched out into two strands in the selected Polish newspapers. One, discussed above, held that emigration it did not contribute to the collective goals of the East German opposition and their envisioned future nation-building efforts in establishing a more democratic but socialist East Germany. The other maintained that this migration should be perceived as introducing uncertainty but eventually leading to favourable outcomes for the future of the East German civil society. Writing for *TP*, Michael Bartoszek argued that the "escapes" from the GDR "influenced demonstrations" and the creation of further independent initiatives in the GDR.[693] This narrative portrayed the migrants as influencing and reinforcing the protests in the GDR. Although this branch of the "resistance" narrative did not constitute a large portion of migration reporting in the Polish press, its existence suggested a split among the supporters of the transition from the state-socialist order of things in East Germany. Soon this migration reporting gave way to the flurry of reports on the opening of "the Iron Curtain" and the reunification of two German states. It was clear that the tumultuous events of the summer and autumn of 1989 introduced much anxiety in the political and social circles in Czechoslovakia and Poland, as well as globally, about the European future which, very quickly, arrived.

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[689] Ibid.
[690] Krystyna Grzybowska, "Zostać i walczyć". *GW*, 2 October 1989.
[691] Mary-Elise Sarotte, *The Collapse: the Accidental Opening of the Berlin Wall*. New York: Basic Books, 2014, 17.
[692] Czarnecki, "Niemiecki październik".
[693] Michael Bartoszek, "Dokąd zmierza NRD?". *TP*, Nr. 45 (2106), 1.

7. COMPARATIVE CONCLUSION

Figure 7-1: "Quo Vadis" by David Černý, 1990.
Thesis author's personal archive, 2017.

The emigration of over 200,000 East Germans from the German Democratic Republic to the Federal Republic of Germany in 1989 via Czechoslovakia and Warsaw has left its mark on Europe.[694] Czechs and Poles, as well as Germans and visitors from abroad, are reminded by evocative art installations of the thousands of East Germans who filled the streets of these capital cities just over thirty years ago. In the Czech Republic, an anthropomorphic sculpture of an East German "Trabant" by David Černý, titled "Quo Vadis", is located in the German embassy garden in Prague's Lobkowitz Palace (Fig. 7-1).[695] Encountered by unsuspecting visitors and tourists as well as those well aware of its existence, the sculpture speaks of the lasting legacies of thousands of East Germans who sheltered there in the summer and autumn of 1989. This "Trabant" walks on four human legs instead of rolling on wheels. Černý combined in this work two East German modes of transportation which led them across countries and borders in pursuit of their dreams. It could be argued that it also embodies the well-known phrase "voting with their feet" which was associated with the perception of their emigration from the GDR as an act of a political protest against the one-party system.[696] The title of this sculpture asks "Where are you going?", as per St Peter's legend of fleeing Rome and offers a parallel for this migration – escaping oppression and tyranny, even if the long road ahead led East Germans to the unknown in the FRG and beyond.

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[694] "Signal" festival in Prague, the "Trabant" installation on the Petřín Hill by Signal Production and Post Bellum, *Trabi*. https://www.signalfestival.com/en/history/2019/trabi/; *Prager Botschaft/en 1989*, https://www.facebook.com/PragerBotschaften1989/; Krzysztof Czajka, *Tschüss DDR!: über Warschau in die Freiheit / Żegnaj DDR!: przez Warszawę ku wolności*. Fundacja Współpracy Polsko-Niemieckiej – Warszawa, 2009.; Ralf Kukula, Matthias Bruhn, *Fany a pes / Fritzi – A Revolutionary Tale*. MAUR Production, 2019.

[695] "David Černý | QUO VADIS | Walter-Benjamin-Platz | 07.11.2019", ART@Berlin, 5 November 2019, https://www.artatberlin.com/en/david-cerny-berlin-quo-vadis-sculpture-walter-benjamin-platz/, (accessed: 5 October 2021).

[696] Mike Feinsilber, "They Voted with Their Feet, and the Wall Came Tumbling Down". *AP*, 11 November 1989.

Asked about the idea behind the piece, Černý explained that while "for the Americans, the symbol of 1989 is Václav Havel, for me it is a "Trabant" passing through the ruined Berlin Wall."[697] For other Czechs, 1989 may also stand for Havel and the "Velvet Revolution", while "Solidarność" and Lech Wałęsa may be associated with that year in Poland. As Černý visualised, the revolutionary 1989 was also marked by a huge, transnationally significant cross-border migration of over 200,000 East Germans.

In Warsaw, East German migration west is immortalised in an art installation that depicts two silhouettes: reflecting each other, shaped from iron and neon lights, standing in front of the gates of the former FRG diplomatic mission in the city's Saska Kępa district. "Through Warsaw to Freedom" by Wojciech Zasadni and Michał Kałużny symbolises the Polish-German friendship (Figure 7-2).[698] One figure's outline was traced with red neon lights and another's with green, representing one person and their two states of being – an East German migrant prior to stepping through the former mission's gates, and after. The threshold between stopping and going, staying in place and moving, oppression and dictatorship, and freedom and democracy was the entry to the West German Embassy. This choice of colour and the symbolism of types of movement here invite one to reflect on Zygmunt Bauman's observation that the migrants, refugees, strangers, unfamiliar to us and often unwanted in our countries, or the vagabonds, as he termed people who tend to travel out of necessity or danger, "are travellers refused the right to turn into tourists", or passport-holding settled residents of a state which allows

Figure 7-2: Wojciech Zasadni and Michał Kałużny, "Przez Warszawę ku wolności", 2014.
Franciszek Mazur / Agencja Wyborcza.pl

In: "Niemcy zrobili pomnik bez zadęcia - ze starej furtki". *Wyborcza.pl*, 4 October 2010, https://warszawa.wyborcza.pl/warszawa/7,95190,8459777,niemcy-zrobili-pomnik-bez-zadecia-ze-starej-furtki.html, (accessed: 5 October 2021).

[697] Jana Pšeničková, "Trabant projíždějící berlínskou zdí je pro mě symbol revoluce, říká David Černý", *Forbes*, 6 October 2021, https://forbes.cz/trabant-projizdejici-berlinskou-zdi-je-pro-me-symbol-revoluce-rika-david-cerny/, (accessed: 14 October 2021).
[698] "Niemcy zrobili pomnik bez zadęcia - ze starej furtki". *Wyborcza.pl*, 4 October 2010, https://warszawa.wyborcza.pl/warszawa/7,95190,8459777,niemcy-zrobili-pomnik-bez-zadecia-ze-starej-furtki.html, (accessed: 5 October 2021).

their travel easily for pleasure.[699] He claimed "*green light for the tourists, red light for the vagabonds*" when he discussed the injustices and double standards people are subjected to when they decide or are forced to move.[700] Before the East German migrants reached the Embassy gates, their mobility was restricted and their lives were in danger. Only once they reached the confines of the West German Embassy in Warsaw (or Prague), they were free to go where they wished – just like West Germans or inhabitants of liberal democratic states which did not prohibit freedom of movement. In this visualisation of the legacy of the 1989 East German migration west, the East German vagabonds were eventually allowed to become tourists, and Poland's capital was depicted as a symbolic facilitator of that freedom and possibility.

The two art installations are not only parts of the legacy of this migration – they also show the interpretations of this process which are underrepresented in the scholarship. The East German "Trabant" became a symbol, and Černý took this into consideration when making his sculpture. While the analysed newspapers tended to depict this car as empty and East-German-free, the vehicle remains an abiding representations of 1989 as a whole in related historical and migration scholarship as well and pays attention to the drivers and passengers of the changes droves of these cars brought to the European Cold War order.[701] This was emphasised in Zasadni and Kałużny's installation, as well as Černý's artistic choices – this process was primarily about the people. This thesis has similarly recognised that while vehicles continue to be important signifiers of freedom, speed, progress, and possibility in general, they stand still without their drivers.[702] It contributes to the scholarship which draws attention to mass migrations of the Cold War which transformed dictatorships and brought down walls with their foundations.

The main aim of this work was to investigate the reporting practices of the East German migration west in Czech, Polish, and English language press of 1989, with a

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[699] Zygmunt Bauman, *Globalization. The Human Consequence*s, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998), 93.
[700] Ibid: these double standards remain in place, as does the stark different between tourists and vagabonds they create and sustain.
[701] Recent book covers, for instance, such as a photograph of Birgit Kinder's iconic mural, in: Peter Gatrell, *The Unsettling of Europe: How Migration Reshaped a Continent*. New York: Basic Books, 2019.; James Mark et al. (ed.), *1989: A Global History of Eastern Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019. Despite a chosen central visual of a person driving a *Trabant* car, little is said about the East German migration west in 1989 via Prague and Warsaw.
[702] A car as a symbol of freedom: BMW ad campaign "The Small Escape", based on the true story of Klaus-Günter Jacobi's escape in a BMW Isetta in 1963, "Berlin Wall: Driving to Freedom in a BMW Isetta", *BMW*, https://www.bmw.com/en/automotive-life/berlin-wall-escapes-in-a-bmw-isetta.html, (accessed: 17 March 2023)

particular focus on migrant identity construction and narratives. Inspired to revise established knowledge and different ways of knowing about the end of the Cold War in Europe by combining the works of historians, sociologists, linguists, and migration scholars, this interdisciplinary and multilingual thesis considered it not only as a diplomatic "crisis" but as a transnational media story to deepen our understanding of the period – as that of migrants, migrations, and then, of revolutions. The East German migration was "the final straw" for the dissatisfied in East Germany and a sign in Czechoslovakia, as Timothy Garton Ash claimed, that a change was needed as it was not only seen and heard on television and radio but also witnessed first-hand in the streets of Prague and Warsaw.[703] In addition to shedding more light on 1989 in Czechoslovakia and Poland, this research has also demonstrated how migration-related stereotypes permeate political debates and form entire exclusionary and xenophobic worldviews which emphasise and essentialise the difference between people and weaponise it to create and recreate those considered strange, other, and unfamiliar to the rest of a society. Populist politicians invoke nationalist arguments against immigrations and paint migrants as a threat or burden to their constituents, country budgets, and cultures to ban, bar, and banish people deemed to be the disruptors of the established order. We should continue to scrutinise the language used to express perceptions about migrating individuals not only because those discussions also relate to settled residents of states – construction of inclusive and fairer societies is at stake here as well.

7. 1. 1989 East German migration as a multilingual news story

This study interrogated English, Polish, and Czechoslovak press representations of the 1989 East German migration west around the so-called "Iron Curtain". The international English language news services highlighted its transnational character and impact. By focusing on the development of various justificatory press narratives used to define migrating individuals' identities through language and selected visual scenes, this thesis offered ways of tackling migration conspiracy stories and derogatory depictions of people in search of dignity outside their home state. The findings of this thesis, interpreted with the help of such concepts as (un)familiarity and transnationalism, highlighted the difficulties in attempts to control migration narratives, showed fluidity in migrant identity constructions which went beyond the typical refugee/migrant and political/economic

[703] Timothy Garton Ash, *The Magic Lantern: the Revolution of '89*, London: Atlantic Books, 2019 [1990], 103.

binaries to define people on the move, and demonstrated diverse reasons, experiences, and reasoning related to migrations. Interpretations of the East German migration through the narrative lenses of potential German reunification, necessary socialist reforms, and dissent and resistance were linked to wider discussions about Europe's past, present, and future in 1989 as the Cold War wound down. Similarly to contemporary confusions, frustrations, and manipulations prevalent in news reports discussing migrations and personal migration stories, various identity markers for East Germans, such as "refugee", "escapee", "tourist", and "emigrant" appeared in the analysed press, thus showing how ambiguous and malleable their migration circumstances were.[704] Their contextual meanings became clearer once situated within the media narratives of their migration.

The *Associated Press* offered a thorough but binary written and visual coverage of the 1989 East German migration. Attempting to present an objective view of the process, the *AP* journalists merged their textual depictions of East German migrants with their visual portrayals and surroundings in a story-unifying way. East Germans were also represented in the *AP* as emigrating from the GDR not only out of political and economic but also social and personal concerns for their and their families' futures. As such, news reports revealed instances of East German protesters becoming emigrants, and emigrants coming back to the GDR to become protesters. The *AP* offered a platform for over 200,000 East German migrants to share their experiences and expectations of their migration to West Germany via Czechoslovakia and Poland. Presented as active, not idling, going about their lives even when their mobility was limited in Prague and Warsaw's West German Embassy compounds, East Germans were generally identified as "refugees" regardless of their legal status, they were portrayed with their belongings, means of transportation, and together with other migrants and local residents. The *AP* reporters have largely conceptualised this migration in general terms of a mass political protest movement, "voting with their feet", consisting of individual motivations to challenge moral and political authority of communists in East Germany.[705] But reported close-up encounters with a handful of migrants in the *AP* also demonstrated their self-identification practices in Prague: scrapping the letters "DDR" from their car licence plates, leaving the hammer and sickle logo on, or painting over it as means of their self-assertion. As Katja Hoyer recently revealed, "40% of people in the east explicitly identify

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[704] Bauman, Zygmunt. "Making and Unmaking of Strangers". *Thesis Eleven*, 43, 1995, 1-16, https://doi.org/10.1177/072551369504300102, (accessed: 16 July 2021), 8.
[705] Phillipp Ther, (tr. J. Riemer). *The Outsiders: Refugees in Europe since 1492*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019, 134.

as "east Germans" and are questioning a popular general view that the events of 1989 in both German states were positive for everyone included – they do not feel a part of the liberal and democratic German state thirty-five years after the reunification.[706] This frustration is exploited by political parties such as Alternative für Deutschland for their far-right campaign purposes, often focused on exaggerated divisions between former East and West Germans and their descendants, with the help of the binary and necessarily divisive "us vs. them" framework. The *AP* coverage of the East German migration of 1989 employed and acknowledged diverse and pluralist identities of migrating East Germans through interviews and statistics news reports without additional judgement. As Hoyer argues, attention to peculiarities and details of the East German experiences in the GDR and reunified Germany is still lacking in empathy and understanding today – they continue to shape national and international order in Germany and wider Europe.[707]

Like others, this migration was a process of encounters in the *AP* – with people, spaces, places, and borders – and that was shown through reports featuring hospitality, sympathy, empathy, and solidarity towards East Germans, but also hostility and violence. The migrants' portrayals as victims of structural state-socialist regime injustices, especially in the area of human rights, were supported by vilifying portrayals of their migration spaces – the GDR, Czechoslovakia, and, to a lesser extent, Poland. Their migration places, the West German diplomatic missions in Prague and Warsaw, were places of sanctuary and shelter and these portrayals strengthened the migrants' depictions as brave, determined, and strong individuals with will and agency. However, they were also portrayed as FRG pawns in its plans to bring back a unified German state by means of influencing emigration from the GDR and weakening the state, and the *AP* shared the core points of this anti-migration narrative. With every news report on migration, ordinary people and their struggles are used in opinion battles "for the conquest and subordination of human minds and feelings", as Bauman defined it.[708] In the topic of migration, he argued, our morality and our fears of the unknown encapsulated in the many "strangers" coming to our country from elsewhere confront each other, and the media narratives which explain any migration to us make us decide whether we look away or look for ways

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[706] Katja Hoyer, "What's "wrong" with east Germany? Look to its long neglect by the wealthy west", *The Guardian*, 7 March 2024, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2024/mar/07/east-germany-west-far-right-afd-gdr, (accessed: 7 March 2024).
[707] Ibid.
[708] Zygmunt Bauman, *Strangers at Our Door*. Malden, MA: Polity, 2016, loc. 51-53.

to help.[709] Invoking sentiments of empathy, the *AP* depicted migrants as dependent on the international humanitarianism of the Red Cross and locals' acts of hospitality in Prague and Warsaw, and comments on general hostility in Czechoslovak and hospitality practices in Poland filled their news reports. Representations of the Czechoslovak and Polish authorities as inhospitable and welcoming, respectively, implied the *AP* journalists' biases towards liberal democracies, although still in transition: anyone subverting state-socialist rules and rigid national laws was a righteous freedom fighter. Overall, the *AP* news on the 1989 East German migration could be considered among the most insightful lenses into the lives of the migrants themselves since it was the only platform which provided space for their self-defining interviews and introduced local Czechoslovak and Polish voices to comment on their migration. However, portrayals of state-socialist countries as necessarily inhospitable, unwelcoming, and repressive while depictions of non-communist states as humanitarian and welcoming demonstrated their binary, simplistic interpretations of this migration.

The Czechoslovak press narrated this migration differently in the three analysed and initially rhetorically similar newspapers – *Lidová Demokracie* (*LD*), *Svobodné Slovo* (*Slovo*), and *Mladá Fronta* (*MF*). They ideologically diverged from one another in their discourse during the six months of this migration as a strategy for positive self-representation at the time of changing international politics. Contrary to the English language reporting, the official Czech language press offered no interviews with East Germans, unlike their Polish colleagues. Their reporting remained state-focused and "ideologically colonised" by the "newspeak" of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, as Petr Fidelius aptly defined the phenomenon, and had little regard for the difficulties East Germans encountered during this migration.[710] Throughout its duration, *Slovo* increasingly depicted this migration in liberal terms, followed by *MF*, and *LD*. Visual portrayals of East Germans often told a mismatching story of its own – photographs were a largely independent illustration from the textual content provided rather than an extension of it or its visualisation. *Slovo* and *MF*, however, covered this process in the most human-centric terms by publishing photographs of East Germans rather than their vehicles, for instance. Their journalists also referred to the migrants as refugees more often than their Czechoslovak colleagues in *LD* who chose terms such as "citizen of the GDR", "escapee", and only later defined them as unsatisfied residents calling for socialist

[709] Ibid., loc. 1102-1106.
[710] Petr Fidelius, *Řeč komunistické moci*. Praha: Triáda, 2016 [1983], loc. 200-213.

reforms. The reporting of *LD* and *MF* often showed the East German migrants in terms of their alleged uncertain pasts, selfish ambitions, and doubtful motives, which mirrored those of "the West" were trying to reach. However, as borders opened for them in Hungary and Warsaw, these publications of the state-controlled press shifted their rhetoric. "Traitors of the state" – and of state-socialism – became "former citizens of the GDR" and even "refugees" towards the end of their migration coverage. These changed views signalled (at least performative) reform-mindedness and demonstrated the inability of the orthodox Czechoslovak communist elites to control the narrative of this migration at a time when the changing international political and ideological setting in Europe increasingly discredited state-socialist governments and their values.

Contrary to the *AP* and Polish news, the Czechoslovak press depicted the East German stay in Prague's West German mission as a chaotic and disorderly environment with weather descriptions pelting of rain and cold. Illnesses which followed were depicted as deserved punishment for their decision to abandon their homeland. Closing borders were also attributed to the righteousness of the state law over the precarious lives of the East German migrants – yet it crumbled with each migrant pacing around in the Prague mission's garden or train passing through the Czechoslovak-GDR-FRG borders. The opening of the Czechoslovak borders with the FRG was directly tied to this migration – this decision had reportedly rendered "the Iron Curtain" meaningless. The East German migration reporting by the Czechoslovak press showed moderate steps of adjustment to a reformist worldview regarding this migration and migrant identities but unreformed ideological dogmatism remained a strong rhetorical component in its conceptualisations. Overall migration reporting in the Czechoslovak press revealed the changing linguistic discourse on the interpretation of international affairs as all analysed newspapers portrayed certain liberties at unsubscribing from the rigid "authoritative discourse" of the Czechoslovak Communist Party's "newspeak".

Although the Polish press differed from the Czechoslovak press in the degree of expressed pluralism of journalistic opinions, it did so less than had been anticipated. This thesis analysed *Trybuna Ludu* (*TL*), *Gazeta Wyborcza* (*GW*), *Tygodnik Powszechny* (*TP*), and *Życie Warszawy* (*ŻW*) – four different newspapers which became similar to each other and even resembled the *AP* coverage of the East German migration at times. This signalled the turn of uniformist adaptation to more liberal and democratic political thinking in the new semi-democratic Polish government. For instance, *TP* became a louder critic of the Polish government and society yet leaned towards supporting the

socialist reforms, which were also praised in the official Polish communist party newspaper *TL*. *GW* eventually found its liberal footing advocated by liberal members of "Solidarność", which contrasted with an incremental subversive shift in the *ŻW* news regarding socialist reformism. However, despite rising pluralism in the Polish news content, this migration reporting brought fearmongering and nationalist discussions on the Polish-German historical past to the fore. It appraised this migration with caution, anxiously awaiting a potential German reunification as its consequence. State borders were the most important item of this narrative, viewed as inviolable components of a non-communist Poland's future. "Solidarność" government members also appeared eager to preserve them, thus sharing argumentative similarities with their coalitional partners, the PZPR, regarding a cautious approach towards facilitating East German migration via Warsaw.

Poland's communist press shifted away from their usual rhetoric, while its more critical and liberal press became even more critical and bold in their reporting practices. Although the definitiveness or effectiveness of this shift in the long-term perspective of restructuring Polish public communications following the communist loss of monopoly on power in the state in 1989 could not be ascertained in this research, the analysed Polish language newspapers nevertheless offered a significant diversity of rhetoric when compared to the Czechoslovak "normalisation-speak" and among themselves.[711] They depicted this migration as weakening at first and then strengthening dissent in the GDR, and these strands of thought shared the migration narrative of threat and caution. The Polish press exploited depictions of warm and hospitable contacts between East Germans and locals to portray its own state as developing towards democratic and humane liberalism. Although the assistance to the migrants was better in Warsaw than in Prague, its officials frequently accepted accolades for it even when local residents, the Polish Red Cross, and the Catholic Church were responsible for the hospitality provided. These depictions alluded to a sharp ideological and political schism between the formerly allied Polish and Czechoslovak political establishments in 1989. Even the depictions of Prague and Warsaw's West German Embassies signalled a break between the two former allies by focusing on the aesthetics of these sanctuaries through references to dirt and chaos in the first and calmness, cleanliness, and organisation in the second. Traces of a martyrological narrative that put Poland in the position of a victimised nation and (West)

[711] Michał Głowiński, *Totalitarian Speech.* Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Edition, 2014, 8.

Germany as its aggressive adversary betrayed stereotypical "self" and "other" dichotomies based on black-and-white portrayals of Polish historical experiences. Although this view was challenged at the time, it remains a popular self-perception in the country, thus demonstrating the endurance of the "totalitarian speech", which paints social affairs in dichotomous black-and-white colours, in the country.[712] Yet as Michał Głowiński believed, and this thesis endorses, scholarship focusing on the manifestations of this type of "newspeak" and taking language as a power-laden means of influence of information and knowledge have the potential to "expose the mechanisms of manipulation, rendering them less persuasive or even ineffectual".[713]

7. 2. Narrated East German migrant identity representations

Zygmunt Bauman has argued persuasively that each society makes its own strangers who do not fit within subjectively agreed (and objectively questionable) borders and the general "cognitive, aesthetic and moral map[s]" they help to create.[714] Those maps are drawn and redrawn with stories we tell ourselves and others around us about who we are in order to make sense of our social world, and strangers are not only the by-products, but also the means of [such identity] production", Bauman held.[715] This research has found three main migration narratives which dominated the reporting on the 1989 East German migration in selected English, Czech, and Polish language news. Those three main ways of making sense of changing political order in Europe in 1989 constructed a migrating person's identity as well as helped situate local Poles and Czechoslovaks themselves in that order. One narrative appeared in all analysed news sources and framed the East German migration as a danger to the order and stability in Poland and Czechoslovakia, a concern often disguised as a fear for the post-war European Cold War order. The second story presented this migration as part of state-socialist reforms and *perestroika*, which showed the migrants as victims of the orthodox communist policies in the GDR and as agents of socialist change. These two narratives were particularly prominent in the Polish and Czechoslovak news, and the first narrative was especially noticeable in official Party newspapers in those countries. The third narrative depicted the East German migration as if it were a form of political dissent and resistance. This story varied between the English

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[712] Staff and agencies in Warsaw, "Germany spurns renewed Polish call for war reparations". *The Guardian*, 3 Jan 2023, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/jan/03/germany-spurns-renewed-polish-call-for-war-reparations, (accessed: 21 March 2023).
[713] Głowiński, *Totalitarian Speech.* Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Edition, 2014, 9.
[714] Bauman, "Making and Unmaking of Strangers", 1.
[715] Ibid., 8.

and Polish language news and was not employed in the Czechoslovak reporting on this migration, which demonstrated political choices made by newspaper editors, journalists, and responsible Politburo members in the construction of daily news. At the centre of each narrative stood East German migrants, invariably named and defined in the daily and weekly news, represented in terms of familiarity to the readers and societies they encountered on their way west. Regardless the attempts to represent them with sympathy, especially in English and Polish language news, the migrants were not fully embraced in the political spaces which they transited through or tried to reach despite contributing to the redrawn cognitive, aesthetic, moral, and even physical maps of the continent – their migration invariably forced Polish and Czechoslovak political leaders to revise their visions of order in Europe.

7. 2. 1. Threats

Contemporary migration scholarship has generally settled on the view that depictions of migrations and migrants as disruptors and threats to an established order are the most widely circulating social representations about individuals on the move.[716] Bauman's observation regarding contemporary migrant representations – as the "embodiments of the collapse of order" – is also relevant for the interpretation of the findings of this research.[717] Whether this representation was praised depended on which order was collapsing and who was celebrating it. Although it is difficult to discern whether local East German and Czechoslovak communist authorities saw this migration as precipitating their own downfall from power, this research shows that non-communist cultural and political actors interpreted the East German migration west in a similar manner. This demonstrates that anti-immigration narratives may transcend different regimes and their changes, and are readily employed wherever and whenever it suits the exclusionary and chauvinist narratives of power.[718] Regarding communist "newspeak", it was often based on conservativism, nationalism, and aversion to political and social transformations, and these elements were found both in the 1989 depictions of the East German migration west

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[716] Christine Boswell et al., "The Emergence, Uses and Impacts of Narratives on Migration: State of the Art". *Zenodo*, BRIDGES Working Papers, 2, 2021, 1-26, https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.5720313, (accessed: 12 Jan 2022), 10.; Jari Martikainen and Inari Sakki, "Visual (de)humanization: construction of Otherness in newspaper photographs of the refugee crisis". *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 44(14), 236-266, https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2021.1965178, (accessed: 11 Jan 2022), 238.; Georgia Cole, "Beyond Labelling: Rethinking the Role and Value of the Refugee "Label" Through Semiotics". *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 31(1), 2017, 1-19, https://academic.oup.com/jrs/article-abstract/31/1/1/4079373/, (accessed: 27 Nov 2019), 13.
[717] Zygmunt Bauman, *Strangers at Our Door*. Malden, MA: Polity, 2016, loc. 177-186.
[718] Harsha Walia, *Border and Rule*, 2.

and contemporary anti-migration narratives.[719] It tends to depict migrating individuals as a threat to the European social order, economy, and security, alleging the difference they are defined by is dangerous and unwelcome. In this story, the migrants are scapegoats for the problems and scandals political elites are incapable of controlling and unwilling to accept responsibility for. This decreases chances of encounters between people perceived as historically different and the understanding such encounters may bring forth that furthers integration and cooperation.

One of the narratives that relied on the figure of an East German migrant as a "stranger" and an unwelcome, threatening entity whipped up old historical hatreds and xenophobia. According to it, the revanchist West Germany was using emigrants as weapons of propaganda and territorial conquest against East Germany to further their plan of re-establishing the German Reich within its 1937 borders. This view was variously reflected on, embraced, or challenged in the English, Czech, and Polish language press: it was most persistently upheld in the Czechoslovak news and had the least prominence in the English language *Associated Press*. Direct referrals to historic experiences and their future repetition, such as claims in the Czechoslovak *LD* stating that "very much so like in the past, the enemies of socialism are trying to undermine the consequences of history", tapped into anti-German sentiments and the collective trauma imposed on the Polish and Czechoslovak populations, particularly in the 1930s and 1940s.[720] Naïve and greedy East Germans, the story went, were lured away from the security the GDR socialist system offered by the right-wing imperialists in the FRG.[721] Often, news reports portrayed the migrants as teenage delinquents and irresponsible parents, as no "good parent" would subject their children to cold and sickness during the rainy central European autumn in Prague and Warsaw.[722] Their living conditions at the FRG Embassy were represented as "abnormal" and "unbearable" for locals, as well as wholly "undesirable" for the Czechoslovak authorities.[723] According to the Czechoslovak press, the alleged aim of this "anti-GDR propaganda" was to demonise state-socialist regimes, or to "persuade Western society that our [socialist] society is inhumane" while, as this narrative implied, the

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[719] Głowiński, *Totalitarian Speech*, 187.

[720] "Provokační kampaň". *LD*, 12 September 1989, Nr. 215, 2.
[721] Zč, "Křižácké tažení imperialismu". *Slovo*, 12 September 1989, Nr. 215, 2.; "Stanovisko NDR". *Slovo*, 25 August 1989, Nr. 200, 2.
[722] Mi+Bay, "Řešení situace na velvyslanectví NSR". *LD*, 5 October 1989, Nr. 235, 3.
[723] "H.-D. Genscher jednal v Praze". *LD*, 2 October 1989, Nr. 232, 2.; "Nóta předána velvyslanci NSR". *LD*, 4 October 1989, Nr. 234, 1.

migrants lacked humanity themselves.[724] According to Michał Głowiński, "evoking fear is a means of gaining control over society, since the people who wield this weapon inevitably present themselves as fully aware of what is happening, unwilling to surrender to illusions and always ready to fight for the interests of those under threat".[725] This narrative did not acknowledge that this migration was first and foremost a difficult experience for the migrants who did not come to Warsaw or Prague to destroy it. Viewed as entirely selective from a vast variety of historical encounters between the nations at hand here, this story demonstrates how the migrants' "familiarity" was established as carrying negative consequences for the state-socialist societies.

The story that West German right-wing politicians were conspiring to restore the Third Reich by encouraging the depopulation of East Germany, corresponded with the *AP*'s initial portrayals of other migrations taking place in 1989.[726] They were represented as jeopardising the prospects of cooperation between "the East" and "the West".[727] The *AP* reported on this argument mainly as part of their objective reporting tenets while its overall view of this migration clearly subverted this narrative. Yet the *AP* also depicted them as pitiable emissaries of the allegedly imminent (West) German-imposed doom. Representations of East Germans as youth delinquents arriving in Prague in late October and early November reports fit this narrative. Not only were certain groups of migrants depicted as ignorant and naïve youngsters, but their casual beer sipping and chatting with locals in Prague was also represented as anti-social behaviour equated with delinquency. Thus, a strand of the *AP* migration narratives included a fraction of identity representations of the migrants as adventurous and unserious vagabonds, for whom emigration from the GDR was a momentary whim and a fleeting dream of the day.

The entire need for emigration from the GDR was at times challenged in all analysed press.[728] Staying in East Germany was represented as a virtue, and was initially reinforced even by West German politicians, as the migrants were urged to use "official" and "legal" channels of emigration instead of the Embassy routes, which were considered

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[724] "K odchodu občanů NDR do NSR". *LD*, 3 October 1989, Nr. 233, 1.; "Opět asi tisíc lidí". *Slovo*, 3 October 1989, Nr. 233, 1.
[725] Głowiński, *Totalitarian Speech*, 346.
[726] Chapter 4, section 1 of this thesis.
[727] Kevin Costelloe, "Refugees Pour Across Europe's Borders in Biggest Migration in Years". *AP*, 26 August 1989.; Kevin Costelloe, "Ethnic Conflicts grow in Europe, Soviet Union". *AP*, 29 June 1989.; Ondřej Hejma, "Flood of East German refugees resumes after border reopening". *AP*, 1 November 1989.
[728] Carol J. Williams, "Bonn Urges East Germans to Leave Embassies in East". *AP*, 9 August 1989.; Mike Feinsilber, "U.S. Experts Assay the Exodus: Bitter, Emboldened, Furious Germans". *AP*, 5 October 1989.

"illegal".[729] This term encapsulates the GDR and Czechoslovak notion defining the 30th of September decision to allow East German emigration from Prague and Warsaw's missions to West Germany via East German territory.[730] Attempts to discredit the migrants who arrived in Prague and Warsaw in October and November were rampant, as they were defined as "not real refugees" but greedy materialists and opportunists. This view was also visually supported by photographs of fashionable people clad in trendy clothing who left their expensive vehicles around Prague and Warsaw as they were forced to abandon them before leaving these capitals for West Germany.[731] *TL* reporter Marian Kuszewski described the migrants in Prague as people who did not appear to be "searching for bread and jobs" because they looked "well-nourished and neat, even wearing fashionable clothes."[732] Open complaints about East German vehicles "clogging" the narrow streets of the Embassy district and ruining the scenery of the locals' evening walk depicted the migrants and their cars as undesirable guests and an unwelcome sight in the Czech language press.[733] Therefore, this narrative encouraged readers to dismiss East Germans in Prague and Warsaw as untrustworthy individuals, not worthy of support and empathy due to their perceived self-sufficiency based on their appearance and possessions. Their emigration was depicted as economically motivated and not personally, politically, or socially pertinent.

The East German migration via Warsaw forced the new Polish authorities to honour either their old communist commitments or the new government's ethos, which included the "Solidarność" trade union members of many walks of life, including dissidence against the former PZPR regime.[734] Poland's membership in the Warsaw Pact governed the state's borders at least until late October in 1989, which meant that hundreds of East Germans were barred from this political space.[735] Its western borders were

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[729] Deborah G. Seward, "East Germans in Warsaw Embassy Hoping to go West". *AP*, 14 September 1989.; Urszula Kozierowska, "Przez Budapeszt nad Ren?". *ŻW*, Nr. 185, 9 August 1989, 4; Urszula Kozierowska, "Kolejne reakcje w NRD". *ŻW*, Nr. 187, 11 August 1989, 4.; Urszula Kozierowska, "Prywatne ponowne zjednoczenie?". *ŻW*, Nr. 188, 12-13 August 1989, 6.; Jerzy Weber, J. "Uciekinierzy – wewnętrzną sprawą NRD". *TL*, Nr. 207, 6 September 1989, 6.; Martin Komárek, "Nevítaný kempink". *MF*, 3 October 1989, Nr. 233, 5.; "Prohlášení mluvčího Čs. vlády". *MF*, 4 October 1989, Nr. 234, 5.; Zč, "Křižácké tažení imperialismu".
[730] Manfred Hees, "East Germans in Prague, Warsaw Allowed to Emigrate to West Germany". *AP*, 30 September 1989.
[731] Figure 4-6; Mi, "Další transport do NSR". *LD*, 5 October 1989, Nr. 234, 2.; Komárek, "Nevítaný kempink".
[732] Marian Kuszewski, "Sprzed ambasady RFN i okolic". *TL*, Nr. 232, 5 October 1989, 8.
[733] Radka Kváčková, "Na základě respektování". *Slovo*, 4 October 1989, Nr. 234, 4.
[734] George Jahn, "Czech and East German Authorities Seizing Refugee Passports". *AP*, 18 September 1989.
[735] Ibid.

sensitive because no official peace treaty was signed between the states and their divided authorities following 1945, and the anti-migration narrative claimed that the FRG's propaganda encouraged migrants-criminals to challenge its frontiers and its laws.[736] For this reason, as if to assert the Polish custom and law over these frontiers as well as cement the results of the post-war order as unchangeable, the borders East Germans crossed from the GDR were depicted as "naturally" impermeable and unchallengeable structures.[737] The narrative that depicted East Germans as a threat to the state's security conveniently eclipsed the reflections on Poland's territorial integrity in the potential event of an expansionist reunification of Germany. Consistent historical affiliations of the German state with aggression and threat were encapsulated in the Polish press in a trope of a "bogeyman", which categorised it as "the enemy" of the Polish establishment.[738] This anti-German sentiment was a matter of interest for Michał Głowiński in his analyses of the Polish political rhetoric in the 1970s.[739] His observations enlighten the findings of this research, which point to a continuation of the use of this particular trope in related Polish language news reports on this migration via a semantic conflation of "East" and "West" Germans into "the Germans" Polish audiences were already acquainted with. As East German migrants were allegedly encouraged to emigrate west by West German authorities, this trope functioned as a media template to denote the negative character of both entities. "The Germans" were a threat again, the narrative went: they were migrating against established rules and also helping others to do so via Poland and Czechoslovakia. As Głowiński argued, the use of the trope "appealed to national unity" in Poland and contributed to its self-portrayal as a historically "victimised" nation.[740] Głowiński emphasised that constant call to vigilance and sown distrust in "Germans" was one of the core tenets of nationalist-conspiracist narratives used in Polish communist propaganda which "constitutes the main national bond" in the country.[741] They aided constructions of a worldview of a coordinated assault on state-socialist countries, the alleged real victims

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[736] "Poles Express Anger at West German's remarks on border". *AP*, 7 July 1989.; Carol J. Williams, "Reunification Talks Stirs Jitters Among German Neighbors". *AP*, 3 November 1989.; Urszula Kozierowska, "Kolejne reakcje w NRD". *ŻW*, Nr. 187, 11 August 1989, 4.; Urszula Kozierowska, "Prywatne ponowne zjednoczenie?". *ŻW*, Nr. 188, 12-13 August 1989, 6.
[737] John Daniszewski, "From Mazowiecki Government, Contradictory Statements on Refugees". *AP*, 12 October 1989.; PAP, "Uciekinierzy z NRD nadal w zachodnioniemieckich placówkach". *TL*, Nr. 189, 16 August 1989, 6.
[738] David Nelson, "Refugees Raise Question of German Reunification". *AP*, 8 October 1989.; Ol, "Uchodźcy". *GW*, 8 August 1989.; PAP, "Uciekinierzy z NRD nadal w przedstawicielstwach RFN w Budapeszcie, Berlinie, Pradze i Warszawie". *ŻW*, Nr. 189, 14 August, 4.
[739] Michał Głowiński, "Straszak Niemiecki". 13 March 1977, in: Głowiński, M., *Peereliada: komentarze do słów 1976-1981*. Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1993, 49.
[740] Ibid.
[741] Głowiński, *Totalitarian Speech*, 289-290.

and martyrs of such scenarios, by those wishing them ill. Similarly to this narrative's use in Czechoslovakia, although with more rigour, reports from Poland on this migration identified migrants as hostile "criminal elements, adventurers, unemployed or people with an obscure past".[742] Thus, East Germans who tried to cross the Polish borders were depicted not only as questioning the rightful laws that governed them but also as challenging the post-war order based on simplistic nationalist depictions of the Czechoslovak-German and the Polish-German historic relations.[743] But as the walls were caving in on hardline dictatorships, the decorum of a reforming socialist state was chosen as a new look by the GDR government and its allies in Czechoslovakia (and Poland, to a lesser extent) in order to stop emigration and local protests in East Germany.[744] With this shift, migration narratives changed as well.

7. 2. 2. Victims to change-makers

The Czech and Polish language migration narratives shifted with the East German departure to West Germany via East German territory. All analysed Czechoslovak newspapers demonstrated a switch to reflective articles that called for internal, not external searches for the main reasons behind mass East German emigration, deducing that West Germany's propaganda was not among its primary influences but rather a scapegoat Honecker's regime used to deflect blame for the problems in the GDR.[745] In support of the change in leadership of the GDR communist party to Egon Krenz, an essay by František Jandl in *Svobodné Slovo* argued that more than 200,000 East Germans emigrated from the GDR due to inadequate "living conditions and future potential provided for the young people in GDR society", as well as "bad planning, leading to the lack of products, overpowered bureaucracy, which, over time, killed any initiative and efforts" related to reforms.[746] These shortcomings and injustices, the article claimed, were in the past now – the new government's progressive approach, it went, would not only satisfy angry demonstrators but also bring back disappointed emigrants and prevent more people from leaving their socialist Germany. This GDR *perestroika* reform narrative,

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[742] Nesha Starcevic, "Refugee Train Arrives; More East Germans Try to Board in Dresden". *AP*, 5 October 1989.; PAP. "17 tys. obywateli NRD przybyło do RFN". *TL*, Nr. 219, 20 September 1989, 6.
[743] Komárek, "Nevítaný kempink".; "Prohlášení mluvčího Čs. vlády". *MF*, 4 October 1989, Nr. 234, 5.; Zč, "Křižácké tažení imperialismu". *Slovo*, 12 September 1989, Nr. 215, 2.
[744] Zč, "Křižácké tažení imperialismu". *Slovo*, 12 September 1989, Nr. 215, 2.
[745] "K odchodu občanů NDR do NSR". *LD*, 3 October 1989, Nr. 233, 1.; "Opět asi tisíc lidí". *Slovo*, 3 October 1989, Nr. 233, 1.
[746] František Jandl, "Kontinuita nebo změny?". *Slovo*, 21 October 1989, Nr. 249, 2.; Lothar Heinke, "V nové dimenzi". *Der Morgen* in *Svobodné Slovo*, 15 November 1989, Nr. 269, 2.

however short-lived, depicted East Germans as correct in choosing emigration as a response to the lack of liberalisation efforts in East Germany.

Places such as the West German Embassy in Prague were no longer depicted with the help of references to dreary autumn weather.[747] Over six months, locals grew used to East Germans and it could be argued that the reported practices of help and hospitality increased in the October and November news.[748] Reported encounters with locals in *Slovo* highlighted connections which challenged official narratives of a repetition of traumatic history.[749] The decision to allow the East German travel to West Germany via the GDR was represented as a carnival and a festivity – the GDR regime's benevolence and the Czechoslovak cooperation ended the times of the alleged crisis in Prague. Visually, a close-up photograph of happy East Germans reached the pages of the youth newspaper *MF* and confronted the readers with their gratefulness to Poles and Czechoslovaks.[750] Although its journalists did not report on the Warsaw route in detail, they defined the decision reached there regarding the possibility for East Germans to renounce their GDR citizenship in similar terms.[751] The migrants were depicted as "former citizens of the GDR", and their "escape" as a "permanent emigration" rather than an illegal fight from their state. Rather, their emigration was instead defined as "unauthorised", which laid blame for the East German frustrations over international travel on those who did not previously authorise it.[752] The migrants were even referred to as "refugees" in *MF*, in a sense of a popular use of the word as in the *AP* rather than as a reference of their legal status.[753] They were represented as rightfully distrustful of their state leadership's promises of reform and as enacting their own reforms, thus becoming agents of change in the Czechoslovak press.

Given the previously employed anti-immigration narrative which was used to justify certain selected East German migrant identity choices in the analysed news sources, it is difficult not to see the abovementioned shift in their identity representations and their migration reporting as dependant on the international political shift in attitudes

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[747] Mi, "Další transport do NSR". *LD*, 5 October 1989, Nr. 234, 2.; Mi+Bay, "Řešení situace na velvyslanectví NSR". *LD*, 5 October 1989, Nr. 235, 3.
[748] "Zpráva ČTK a ADN". *Slovo*, 4 October 1989, Nr. 234, 4.
[749] Radka Kváčková, "Na základě respektování". *Slovo*, 4 October 1989, Nr. 234, 4.; Jaš, "Odjezd další skupiny". *Slovo*, 5 October 1989, Nr. 235, 1.; "Řešení problému". *Slovo*, 4 October 1989, Nr. 234, 1.
[750] Fig. 5-6.
[751] "Bývalí občané NDR odletěli z PLR". *LD*, 18 October 1989, Nr. 246, 2.
[752] "Nóta velvyslanectví". *MF*, 4 October 1989, Nr. 234, 5.; "Dorazili do Hofu". *MF*, 6 October 1989, Nr. 236, 6.
[753] Milan Vodička, "Epilog dramatu uprchlíků". *MF*, 5 October 1989, Nr. 235, 1, 5.

towards this migration and (at least partial) revaluation of its potential consequences for the European Cold War order. Although some scepticism and doubt about the intentions of East German migrants reportedly remained in Czechoslovakia, local residents of Warsaw grew more familiar with East Germans there and treated East Germans with sympathy and understanding, for which the migrants were grateful.[754] Reporters and locals could speak with them and learn that many East Germans felt that they had no liberties to express their political opinions in the GDR.[755] The most conservative Polish newspaper analysed in this thesis, the communist party's *Trybuna Ludu*, even reported on the "unusually positive far-reaching effects" the "legal" East German emigration would bring to the FRG "government, demographics, and society."[756] *TL* reporter Daniel Luliński referred to this migration as a "huge loss" for the GDR because many talented and skilful members of its society abandoned it.[757] Thus, the threatening familiarity of the migrants as encouraged to bring down the GDR regime by the FRG right-wing revanchists, or the so-called "German bogeymen" in the Polish press, was challenged by reports on direct encounters with them in 1989. This reform narrative also offered a different point of view from which one could view the future of the Polish-German relations – one not based on historical recollections of negative encounters employed as a dividing trope of alienation between these societies but on more openness and communication. This demonstrated the hardline state-socialist authorities' breakdown of usual ideological "newspeak" and their inability to control the public communication about this migration without international communist party support to ensure ideological anti-migration unity. Thus, the 1989 East German migration press coverage in Czech, Polish, and English language press opened up discussions not only about the European past, but also its potential futures which did not exclude state-socialist forms of reform from the discourse.

7. 2. 3. Heroic dissidents and unpatriotic heroes

The resistance narrative that posited East Germans as individuals who influenced changes in the GDR regime by dissenting against those in power and their restrictions was the

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[754] Piotr Tymochowicz, "Przez Polskę szybko i bezpiecznie". *GW*, 18 October 1989.
[755] Ibid.
[756] PAP, "Trwa exodus obywateli NRD". *TL*, Nr. 222, 23-24 September 1989, 7.; PAP, "Zmniejsza się napływ uchodźców z NRD". *TL*, Nr. 220, 21 September 1989, 7.
[757] Daniel Luliński, "Drenaż zawodowy i demograficzny wschodniej Europy". *TL*, Nr. 224, 25 September 1989, 5.; Jerzy Weber, "Głód mieszkaniowy – nie do rozwiązania". *TL*, Nr. 249, 25 October 1989, 4.; Urszula Kozierowska, "Nie słabnie fala uchodźców z NRD". *ŻW*, Nr. 233, 6 October 1989, 4.

most dominant way of framing the 1989 East German migration west via Prague and Warsaw in the *Associated Press*. It was also present in the Polish press but missing from the Czechoslovak newspapers. East German migrants were, in the *AP*, the epitome of heroes as ordinary people speaking truth to power. The *AP* news reports about hostile GDR and Czechoslovak political elites, militia, and border staff reprimanding East Germans for emigrating in press announcements, physically stopping them from travelling across borders or accessing the West German Embassy entrances and surrounding barriers supported this narrative. Sympathetic visual portrayals of them represented East Germans as exercising their long-denied freedom of movement despite regulations and repercussions. The hostility was represented as systemic in nature, which endorsed the *AP*'s depictions of the migrants as dissenting refugees who left their repressive socialist state for freedom and liberty elsewhere.

This narrative was the exact opposite of the anti-migration narrative which similarly assessed this news story in dichotomous black-and-white colours. Instead of portraying the migrants as a threat, this narrative criticised the East German and Czechoslovak governments' refusal to offer a truly humanitarian solution to this migration – travel west – and idolised the migrants as freedom fighters who heroically persevered despite mistreatment and abuse. It depicted this migration as a transformative force. For the duration of the East German migration settlement there in Prague and Warsaw, the West German diplomatic institutions became safe havens that protected those sheltering there from deportation and detention. They were places of emigrant self-expression and communication with locals and international journalists.[758] The majority of them were "exactly the kind of people the state doesn't want to leave" because many of them were well-educated and trained specialists in their professional fields.[759] If previously discussed narratives depicted their poor living conditions at the Prague Embassy as a deserved punishment for the betrayal of their GDR state, this narrative shifted the discussion towards the moral decay of the authorities who ruled over political territories over their garden fences.[760] The violence and illnesses East German children had to experience during their stay in the embassy gardens were defined as preventable mistreatment by local political authorities who refused to compromise and offer them

[758] Girard C. Steichen, "Why East Germans Want to Flee Their Country". *AP*, 17 September 1989.
[759] Carol J. Williams, "East German Refugee Flood Creates Pool of Low-Cost Workers". *AP*, 24 August 1989.
[760] Manfred Hees, "Scenes of Hope and Anxiety at West German Embassy". *AP*, 7 October 1989.

emigration or additional accommodation.[761] Although the Czechoslovak police behaviour towards the migrants was depicted textually as inconsistently harsh, this exact depiction stuck in the *AP* due to their journalists' use of powerful visual evidence.[762] These representations strengthened depictions of peaceful East German migrants as pitiful but strong victims who were heroic in their perseverance to defy unjust state-socialist practices.

Depictions of the Czechoslovak and Polish state borders in the *AP* should also be considered as informing the narrative of resistance and dissent which provided meaning to the East German migrant identities.[763] Represented as functioning against individual liberties, the portrayals of borders East Germans had to cross fit typical understanding of their purpose – to protect the state from real and imagined enemies by ensuring the impermeability of its frontiers. As such, the 3rd of November opening of the Czechoslovak-FRG border was represented in the *AP* as a victory of migrants over the repressive regulatory system of bordering that curtailed civic freedoms.[764] The *AP* reports on the changed behaviours of the border staff as well, as one interviewed East German couple even indicated that they were waved through the Czechoslovak-FRG border opening by the border staff with a friendly "Auf Wiedersehen"".[765] Changing border circumstances and the related easier travel abroad emboldened many East German migrants to consider themselves a part of the protesters who stayed in East Germany, chanting "Wir sind das Volk" ("We are the people").[766] The representations of the migrants who chose "voice" over "exit" and vice versa implied that resistance against the state-socialist dictatorship in the GDR had many forms – even those who had previously decided to leave their state came back to campaign for reforms and change, while those who left considered themselves protesters because their emigration was an act of dissent to them.

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[761] Manfred Hees, "East Germany Lets Holdouts Go West but Clamps Down on Further Travel". *AP*, 3 October 1989.
[762] Fig. 4-2.
[763] "Number of Refugees in Prague's Bonn Mission Approaching 900". *AP*, 25 September 1989.; George Jahn, "Czech and East German Authorities Seizing Refugee Passports". *AP*, 18 September 1989.
[764] Manfred Hees, "West German Embassy Close to Overflowing; More Refugees Expected". *AP*, 3 November 1989.
[765] Kevin Costelloe, "Thousands Arrive in West Germany After Door to Freedom Opens". *AP*, 4 November 1989.; Manfred Hees, "Refugees Converge on West German Embassy Despite Open Border". *AP*, 4 November 1989.
[766] Allison Smale, "Why So Far, So Fast in East Germany?". *AP*, 9 November 1989.

Securitisation rhetoric related to state borders was not amiss in the East German migration reporting in Polish, which brings the topic closer to contemporary journalistic coverage of processes of human mobility.[767] Reported criminalisation of border-crossing attempts and prison sentences for those caught at the Polish borders highlighted the assessment of the East German migration as an illegal act. By October, however, "citizens of the GDR", a common denominator for East Germans in Prague and Warsaw in the Polish press, became "refugees" in the Polish press.[768] Despite that, the views on the state border as an inviolable state frontier one could only cross with visas, passports, and through special crossing points did not change and the Polish migration reporting branched in the narrative of resistance that contrasted with *AP* conceptualisations of emigrating East Germans. Particularly, the migrants were constructed as "bad dissidents" in *Gazeta Wyborcza* and *Tygodnik Powszechny*. Their journalists reported the East German independent initiative members' views and reflections on this migration, which led to the portrayals of the migrants as unpatriotic individuals who weakened dissidence in the GDR.[769] Showing clear favouritism towards dissident initiatives in the GDR, the Polish press held that this emigration divided East German society and the GDR communist elites "exploited" this division and legitimised their vision of a reformed socialist system, thus also dictating the form and pace of any potential reforms.[770] Yet, this view was challenged by Polish journalists that the "escapes" from the GDR "influenced demonstrations" and further creation of additional independent initiatives in the state.[771] Hence, emigration was seen both as a positive change and a tarnished mode of civic resistance in oppositional GDR circles and among the Polish non-communist thinkers who supported them.

What these three migration narratives and related identity representations have shown, however, was not only how migrations and migrants were perceived in 1989 in the Czech, Polish, English-speaking world. They have also shown how the past, present, and future of central Europe was perceived and imagined, as well as how order, change, and resistance were understood. The persistent recycling of anti-migration and cautionary

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[767] PAP, "Uciekinierzy z NRD nadal w zachodnioniemieckich placówkach". *TL*, Nr. 189, 16 August 1989, 6; Zygmunt Bauman, *Society under Siege*, 227.
[768] Piotr Tymochowicz, "Przez Polskę szybko i bezpiecznie". *GW*, 18 October 1989.
[769] (Mm). "Zostać i walczyć". *GW*, 12 September 1989.; "Ponad berlinskim murem". *GW*, 28 May 1989.; Piotr Bikont, "Mur się wali". *GW*, 24 July 1989.; Poles support GDR opposition, (Ahe). "Mur przeciw murowi". *GW*. 5 October 1989.; "Obraz tygodnia". *TP*, Nr. 42 (2103), 15 October 1989, 1.
[770] Ibid; Andrzej Czarnecki, "Niemiecki październik". *TP*, Nr. 45 (2106), 5 November 1989, 2.
[771] Michael Bartoszek, "Dokąd zmierza NRD?". *TP*, Nr. 45 (2106), 5 November 1989, 1.

sentiments regarding those seen as strangers, foreigners, and unfamiliar others today may be at least partially explained by how migration host and transit societies in analysis saw themselves, their leadership, and their neighbours in the past. This research has demonstrated how such narratives may be revealed for what they are – constructions of social world within which those societies see themselves and others clearer despite the necessarily blurred lines that allegedly separate "us" from "them". It established the significance of original-source media analysis for grasping its constructions of our worldviews, including its manipulation, as well as ideologies and political choices which guide them.

7. 3. Recommendations for future research

Future researchers interested in the 1989 East German migration to West Germany prior to the fall of the Iron Curtain face a dilemma: they may dig deeper into the archives and trace intricate paths to a series of diplomatic developments that contributed to the management of the 1989 East German migration west as it unfolded through its spaces and places of transit in Prague, Warsaw, Budapest, and Vienna, or they may take a path less travelled into the social and cultural dimensions of this topic. Precisely because this topic remains marginal in the Cold War scholarship, it offers abundant space and scope for additional scholarly contributions to knowledge. Recognizing this potential, future research may be approached from a variety of different disciplinary and methodological angles and the following suggestions are not exhaustive.

A grand endeavour for future researchers would be to produce a holistic account of this migration reporting. In order to do so, one would need to analyse this migration in all of its multi-cultural, multi-lingual, and multi-media settings: visual, textual, and audio news sources of the Hungarian, Austrian, German (East and West), and Soviet cultural spheres on top of the Czech, Slovak, Polish, and American rhetoric. This would not only offer a glimpse into how complicated these processes are but also show how they depend on external influences of reception and social preconceptions. An oral history project focusing on the memories and observations of Prague and Warsaw residents of the East German migration may also be considered to compare the official Czechoslovak and Polish migration narratives with their memories about the process. It would indicate the extent to which the "authoritative discourse" influenced, mirrored, or clashed with wider worldviews of local residents it was set to unify and control. Most importantly, former East German migrants themselves, as well as their relatives and friends who experienced

this migration and lived it, could potentially be interviewed about their own self-representation and self-perception particularly while transiting via Prague and Warsaw, which would enhance the topic's connections with identity and specific area studies.[772] These potential future research options would also strengthen the topic's connection with memory studies of the region, as well as support studies of local languages and cultures more generally.

Migration studies – an interdisciplinary field this research connected the topic of the 1989 East German migration west via Prague and Warsaw with – offers a variety of subject combinations for further studies of this topic, such as human geography and media studies, or visual arts and international relations to name but a few fruitful paths of enquiry. For instance, incorporations of Critical Discourse Analysis in research of media representations of migrations together with memory studies, paying particular interest to the headlines of newspaper articles and reports, may show deeper roots for expressed sentiments about it, preexisting biases towards migrating individuals, and specific ways of framing migrations due to historical precedents.[773] Focusing particularly on the textual and visual contents of analysed news reports, this thesis has highlighted the importance of considering the topic of migration narrative and migrant identity building through interdisciplinary lenses which should not exclude linguistic and historical scholarship from further investigations as well. Just as migrations are about movement, they are also always about communication – after all, today it is likelier that we would first read about it in the news from a privileged position in our own home than witness it firsthand.[774] Specifically, they may be studied in the original languages of the selected media even if they are considered to be the so-called "minor" European languages, as opposed to English as a *lingua franca* of international research. That opens up nuance and details that may go unnoticed in the retellings of their development in "major" languages.[775] Engaging with non-English language knowledge and experience to study non-English language settings and environments broadens researchers' cultural horizons and opens up

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[772] A task for a German-speaking researcher.
[773] See footnote 743 in this thesis for an example. It is a well-established method for studies on news or images shared online, i. e. Teun A. van Dijk, "Discourse and Migration", 227-245, in: Ricard Zapata-Barrero and Evren Yalaz (eds.), *Qualitative Research in European Migration Studies*, (Springer: Cham, 2018).
[774] Although with conflict and climate change drastically uprooting people, one should only hope the press becomes our only medium of such an experience.
[775] Tony Judt and Timothy Garton Ash's works, among others, show how important it is to delve into sources in their original languages and speak with local people from the country of interest in order to revise and reimagine its processes authentically.

new comparative paths and mediums of academic enquiry, allowing one to at least partially access and present complex worldviews, previously potentially misunderstood, misinterpreted, or entirely unknown. If studied from a comparative perspective, this methodology also reveals various mindsets, both matching and contrasting, which interplay in contemporary political, social, and cultural processes and phenomena.

The famous 1989 was a year of revolutions, "refolutions", and migrations. Desire and necessity for freedom included freedom of travel. In any similar research, migrating individuals should be considered as active agents in forging their own fates and narratives, and although politicians often decide whether they are allowed to cross borders and other state frontiers, political and diplomatic decision-making processes they are involved in should not overshadow the social and cultural dimensions of their migration. Otherwise, if a migration is not also perceived as an impactful process shaped by ideological, social, or cultural contexts, then the work of language and existence of specific individual and socially-shared worldviews which it forms go unquestioned as if the false hierarchies of deservingness and acceptance it creates are the norm we should continue to reproduce with our speeches and actions. This work demonstrates that there is a need for further examination of the complex relationships and structures that make migrations into undesirable processes and migrants into undeserving and unwanted strangers in both authoritarian and democratic societies. How should a migrating individual be to experience hospitality instead of hostility on top of their already often gruelling migrations away from home, and how should a migration be to lose constant associations with concepts such as a "crisis", a "problem", or an "unwelcome sight"? Most importantly, following Karel Čermák's questioning of local social identities of transit spaces, we need to prod into the societies migrants encounter during their migrations.[776] How should they build and enable wider acceptance of distraught, unfamiliar individuals in their nation-states, and how should they offer sanctuary and hospitality to those who need it? By considering migrations this way we can understand clearer how our global orders of movement of people and information construct them and shape our views about our lives and place in them.

[776] Karel Čermák, "Jací Jsme?". *Lidové noviny*, 2 (10), October 1989, https://www.lidovky.cz/historie-obrazem?objekt=popup&datum=1989_10&stranka=1, (accessed: 12 February 2022).

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