Chapter 1. West European Communism and Internationalism Theoretical and Analytical Framework
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In this framework chapter I introduce the main analytical and conceptual tools on which the analysis of the French and Italian communist parties and their internationalism, strategy and ideology, is based. These tools include a working concept of “proletarian internationalism,” and a method for understanding the varieties of internationalism, over time as well as between cases. Furthermore, I propose a set of hypotheses on the longer-term significance of the Czechoslovak crisis to Cold War history, to the history of the communist world, and to West European communism specifically. I then introduce the contexts in which the analysis is set, that is to say, domestic politics in Italy and France between 1956 and the late 1970s, developments in the Soviet-aligned communist world in the same period, and Cold War developments and international relations. The chapter starts with a discussion of the existing literature on West European communism and the Czechoslovak crisis.

1. INTERNATIONALISM AND WEST EUROPEAN COMMUNISM IN THE LITERATURE

The literature dealing with West European communism has not addressed the impact of the Czechoslovak crisis in a systematic way. This is so despite the fact that the Czechoslovak crisis is invariably noted as a significant moment in the histories of these parties, and that a widespread intuition exists as to the dramatic impact of the 1968 events. The lack of systematic research is primarily due to the non-availability, until recently, of primary sources on the topic. Furthermore, the literature on West European communism and internationalism as a whole features some shortcomings, due to the analytical perspectives that are commonly adopted. I will now discuss
some of these shortcomings, before giving an overview of the interpretations offered in the literature on the impacts of the Czechoslovak crisis on the PCI and PCF.

1.1. Scholarship on communism and Cold War biases

The literature on (West European) communism has often been ideologically inspired. Not surprisingly, this is particularly the case with respect to the issue of internationalism and the political, ideological, material and symbolic ties which West European communist parties maintained with the Soviet Union and other socialist states. A central question that runs through all of the literature on West European communism, either explicitly or implicitly, regards the tension between national belonging and internationalism. Somewhat simplifying, it can be assessed that the works on West European communism written during the Cold War have either understood internationalism as necessarily antagonistic to “national interests,” or have, inversely, minimized the importance of internationalism in an attempt to highlight the truly national character of these parties. Politically or ideologically inspired positions correspond to these different approaches. While, generally, scholars hostile to Soviet-aligned communism held an antagonistic view on internationalism and domestic interests, those who wished to downplay internationalism and loyalty to the Soviet Union were most often sympathetic to (Soviet) communism. The first type of approach was concerned with denouncing the dependence of these parties on the Soviet Union. It has, therefore, failed to perceive a dynamic interaction between national belonging and belonging to an international movement, and has often been unwilling to problematize the notion of national interest. The second type of approach, concerned with downplaying Soviet influences on the politics of these parties, has often failed to grasp the absolute centrality of internationalism to the identities, motivations and strategies of communist party leaders and militants. It should be emphasized, however, that the attempt here is by no means to seek a non-ideological or post-ideological position. The point of departure is, rather, that the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of Soviet-aligned internationalism shifts the perspective of the historian into one that needs neither to justify Soviet-aligned internationalism nor to denounce it for immediate political reasons, but which can start comprehending the phenomenon by fully contextualizing it.

Before the mid-1960s, the literature on West European communism
consisted roughly of two types. Firstly, an Anglo-American school of communist studies emerged in the 1950s; its point of departure was US foreign policy interests and its agenda was to “understand the enemy.” With regard to internationalism, the grand narrative was relatively simple: West European communist parties were purely “imported” from the Soviet Union, they were completely dependent on the latter, and served its superpower and ideological interests. In a more recent variation of this literature there is a tendency to essentialize the importance of internationalism and, with it, the more static and monolithic elements of communist ideology in the overall identity of West European communism. Internationalism is viewed as the main reason why these parties were supposedly fundamentally different from other political groups in Europe. Such an approach has tended to overlook the important variations between cases and the contingency of communist ideology and identity.

Next to this, research on West European communism in Western Europe was, up to the mid-1960s, carried out to an important extent by communists themselves or by their sympathizers. These authors always attempted to convince the reader of the autonomy of West European communist parties vis-à-vis the communist world and the Soviet Union. Issues such as the financial dependency of these parties on the Soviet Union were not dealt with. The analytical status of the Cold War is, in these accounts, not merely that of a relevant context. Rather, the Cold War is the prime and often sole explanatory prism through which to understand communist party behavior. Reproducing the analysis of the “international balance of forces” made by these parties themselves, the alliance with the Soviet Union and the communist world was justified on behalf of the dependence of Western Europe on the United States in the bipolar world constellation. It should be noted, however, that the situation was rather different in France compared to Italy. In France, the communist party in the 1950s and 1960s strictly controlled the writing of an official party history, which was highly apologetic. In Italy, a more open intellectual climate inside the party led to a situation in which party leaders and intellectuals wrote somewhat critical party histories. A “semi-critical” strand of literature was created, which developed an internal critique of the party, that is to say, it criticized the party within the framework of the basic premises of its overall strategy.

From the mid-1960s onwards, in the spirit of détente, an increasing number of scholars who were neither communist nor anti-communist started to show an interest in communism. These were often either people adhering
to the various strands of the new Left, or former party members who had left the communist parties after the crisis of 1956. In terms of factual information, these writers, often former members, were very well informed on issues couched in secrecy, such as Soviet funding. Many of these works are still highly useful, also for reasons of interpretation: despite a certain bitterness which characterizes some of these accounts, these authors often display a refined understanding of the inner workings and the identities of the parties. In France, the 1960s marked the start of the study of communism as an academic topic, and the development of specific conceptual and methodological tools, notably in the works of A. Kriegel. In a sociological-anthropological approach, Kriegel conceptualized French communism as a counter-culture and a counter-society. The approach focused on the domestic implant of the party but by no means avoided the question of internationalism, instead attempting to understand it in a more critical way. The classic “party historiography” in France was hereby fundamentally challenged, in a way the Italian literature never was during the Cold War.

The (massive) literature produced on Eurocommunism during the 1970s and 1980s, mostly by British and American political scientists and historians, brought the old question of national and international belonging to the centre of attention again. The first propositions for a complex understanding of the interaction between national and international belonging were introduced here, notably by D. Blackmer. Blackmer has conceived of communist party strategy as conditioned by three “permanent interests,” none of which, in his view, and at least in the case of the PCI, has had structural priority over the others: the development of the party and its influence over other organizations; the search for political and social alliances; and the preservation of a close link with the Soviet Union and the world communist movement. There was, however, in a context in which the larger West European communist parties seemed close to government participation, a tendency to downplay the impact of internationalism. Many of these works emphasized the autonomy of the West European communist parties, and of the PCI in particular, with regard to the communist world. However, at times a simplistic picture of the contrast between the “democratic” Italian and Spanish communist parties and the “Stalinist” French Communist Party impeded a more subtle analysis of contexts and factors. Furthermore, these works drew attention back to the Cold War and détente as a context. However, the problem here was that the overall interpretation of the impact of the Cold War and the shift to détente was reductive: détente was
nearly always understood as having only positive effects on the domestic and strategic position of the communist parties of Western Europe.\textsuperscript{13} The present study critically engages with this widespread, and so far virtually unchallenged, thesis.

The fall of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe, which led to the release of sizeable archive funds in the early 1990s, especially in Moscow, once more brought internationalism to the centre of attention in communist party history. Mirroring the sympathetic research that had been carried out solely on the basis of the archives of the West European communist parties, a strand of literature now emerged, based exclusively on archives from Moscow and the East European capitals. This led to disruptions especially in Italy, where the more or less hegemonic position of the “critical-sympathetic” literature was now, for the first time, seriously challenged. Political and historiographic myths were being deconstructed at a rapid rate. In the midst of a political situation that was undergoing historical changes, not least the break-up of the PCI itself, a \textit{Historikerstreit} developed on such issues as Stalin’s involvement in the strategy of the “Italian road to socialism” at the outcome of the Second World War.\textsuperscript{14} Both in Italy and France some of the older controversies, such as the question of totalitarianism, emerged once more.\textsuperscript{15}

New ways of understanding the interaction between domestic and international belonging were proposed in the 1990s, notably in the concepts developed by S. Courtois and M. Lazar in France. Courtois and Lazar introduced a distinction between the “societal dimension” and the “teleological dimension” in communist identity. The teleological dimension refers to Marxist-Leninist ideology in its Soviet definition, and those elements that were considered necessary for the development of the ultimate goal—world socialism. These were the concepts of the vanguard communist party and democratic centralism, the development of “orthodox” prescribed strategies and tactics, proletarian internationalism, and being part of a global strategy in which the USSR played the major role. The societal dimension includes those characteristics of the communist party by which it was part of a national context: implant in society in terms of adherents and voters; implant in organizations such as trade unions; intellectual influence; the culture and sociology of the working class, the peasants and intellectuals; its relations with other political forces; its being part of the ideological traditions of the Left; its being embedded in national political culture, national consciousness and national history.\textsuperscript{16}
The new approaches to Cold War history that are emerging in the international literature today combine evidence from newly released archive collections with conceptual and theoretical innovations. These approaches make it possible to respond to some of the earlier shortcomings of communist party historiography. The Italian literature dealing with the PCI in the 1940s and 1950s has made ample use of new Cold War scholarship—the French literature less so.\(^{17}\) However, for the period of the 1960s and 1970s, communist party historiography has so far failed fully to draw on and engage with the new interpretations in Cold War history, with the exception of a number of recent Italian publications on the PCI.\(^ {18}\) One such new interpretation regards the nature of détente and its global, European and domestic implications: a recent strand of “new détente history” can be identified, which understands détente as a contradictory process involving domestic, regional and international political, economic and cultural actors, with very different and sometimes contrasting motivations, rather than a process simply leading to the relaxation of East–West tension.\(^ {19}\) The present study aims to bring West European communism into close connection with the new détente history, and to demonstrate that the nature of (European) détente in the 1960s and 1970s can be clarified by studying the position of West European communism within it.

1.2. *West European communism and the Czechoslovak crisis in the literature*

An encompassing, archive-based monograph on the impact of the Czechoslovak crisis exists for neither the PCI nor the PCF. At the same time, works dealing with the post-World War two history of these parties invariably give broad attention to it and propose interpretations of its impact. Very different, sometimes contradictory, interpretations have been offered in this regard. Moreover, there is a tendency to look at the effects of the crisis either on the domestic development of these parties or on their relations with the socialist regimes, rather than at the interaction between these spheres. A brief discussion of the “coverage” of the Czechoslovak crisis in PCI and PCF historiography is presented here, and it will lead me to identify preliminarily a number of research questions.

As far as the PCI is concerned, some of the recent literature has proposed interesting interpretations of the significance of the Czechoslovak crisis. However, apart from not being based on primary sources in a systematic way, these interpretations tend to focus on either the domestic–internal
dimension or the international dimension. For example, the interpretations proposed by G. Gozzini and R. Martinelli, M. Flores and N. Gallerano, and G. Amyot, have analyzed the Czechoslovak crisis primarily in the context of intra-leadership battles over domestic strategy and in the context of the domestic socio-political developments of the time, in particular the Hot Autumn of 1969. On the other hand, the interpretations by D. Sassoon, J.B. Urban, as well as much of the “Eurocommunist” literature, have primarily framed the Czechoslovak crisis in the international context (the Cold War and détente) and the PCI’s international strategy, the “overcoming of the military blocs.” The choice of context partly explains why such different views exist as to the question of continuity and change. Generally, those studies that have focused on the intra-party and domestic dimensions have not understood the Czechoslovak crisis as a moment of major rift, or much less so than, for example, Togliatti’s death in 1964 or the initiation of the “historic compromise” strategy in 1973. On the other hand, the studies that have emphasized the international dimension have understood the changes in the party’s internationalism after 1968 as a moment of rift in its relations with the communist world, and have drawn wider conclusions from this. Recently, the thesis of the PCI’s shift in 1968–1969 towards more autonomy from the Soviet Union in strategic terms has been re-affirmed. This interpretation goes hand in hand with the view on détente as solely beneficial to the PCI’s domestic position and strategy, and as permitting the party to keep a distance from the Soviet-led communist world. The maintaining of the links with the Soviet Union and the world communist movement after 1968 is understood largely as the result of the PCI’s calculations that an alliance with the former was needed to ensure the European (and global) tendency towards détente. It is this interpretation that, in the case of the PCI specifically, will be challenged here.

The Czechoslovak crisis has been an extremely sensitive matter for the PCF, particularly for reasons of subsequent party-political developments—the Garaudy case, the controversy surrounding the so-called “Kanapa notes,” and the fact that the party was accused of compliance in the post-invasion repression in Czechoslovakia. Encompassing interpretations of the Czechoslovak crisis in the longer-term history of the PCF are less well developed than in the case of the PCI. Many accounts emphasize the lack of impact of the Czechoslovak crisis on the PCF, either in terms of internationalism or domestic strategy. The argument presented here is that limited change in the party’s internationalism did occur, although it
was far less significant than in the case of the PCI and cannot be categorized as a shift towards either “less” or “more” internationalism. Rather, changes should be understood in terms of the party’s identity structure, its domestic sources of legitimation, and the challenge posed by détente. Scholars of the PCF have faced the difficult task of rationalizing the party’s twists and turns during 1968: from its active campaign against military action in Czechoslovakia in the months leading up to the invasion and its dissent against the actual invasion, to its far-reaching reconciliation with and subordination to the Soviet Union and the communist world in the months following the invasion. Changes in the leadership in 1969–1971 are, in most interpretations, offered as the (obvious) explanations for the party’s erratic course. Although this, as will become clear, was an important matter, the aim here is to look for deeper-lying causes that can shed light on some of the longer-term characteristics of the party’s internationalism as well as its relation to the nation.

Alongside this, there exists in the French case a creative strand of literature outside classic party historiography, covering the Left as a whole, communist intellectuals, or “bilateral” relations with the Czechoslovak Communist Party. Two of these are of particular interest here: K. Bartošek’s *Les Aveux des archives*, and P. Grémion’s *Paris–Prague*. The former work, which has aroused considerable polemics in France, remains a major contribution to the study of the PCF, mainly for the richness of its data that Bartošek bases on inquiries into the archives of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, on personal recollections and documents. Grémion has written a highly useful monograph on the intellectual and ideological impact of events in Czechoslovakia between 1968 and 1978 on the French Left in general. This work has the benefit of looking at the various segments on the French Left and at the relations between them, and of linking the reception of the events in Czechoslovakia to broader ideological, intellectual and sociological developments on the French Left. The present study draws on some of Grémion’s insights regarding the “intellectual gaps and misunderstandings” between the French Left and the events in Czechoslovakia.

Some relatively recent overviews of PCF post-World War Two history, such as those by D. Bell and B. Criddle, and M. Lazar and S. Courtois, provide ways of understanding the Czechoslovak crisis in the longer-term history of the party. However, in my view they do not provide an encompassing argument on the impact of this crisis on the longer-term history of the party, in terms of either domestic strategy or internationalism.
Recently, two political biographies have been published of protagonists of the 1968–1969 crisis—J. Vigreux’s *Waldeck Rochet* and G. Streiff’s *Kanapa*. The latter work in particular, based on previously inaccessible archival funds and testimonies by key actors of the period, is highly useful on a factual level. Generally, these works reveal the shortcomings noted above: the emphasis is on the leadership factor and on the scandals and “affairs” in the aftermath of the Czechoslovak crisis, rather than on the more profound shifts in internationalism.

2. THE CONCEPTS AND THE METHOD

2.1. Understanding internationalism

Many of the differences between the approaches to communist party history can be traced back to the question of whether these parties should be studied as any other political party or movement in the context of pluralist party systems, or if they are fundamentally different and require a very specific approach. The study of internationalism needs to deal with this dilemma in a specific way, as their attachment to the Soviet Union precisely has been observed as a characteristic distinguishing them from all other political forces in a democratic and pluralist setting. In this study, the internationalism of the PCI and PCF will be understood as a matter of deepest and inescapable identity, which has profound and strong roots in the histories of these parties and in the mental and cultural structures of their militants and leaders. However, the fact that internationalism is, in a general sense, a matter of identity does not as such explain the concrete features of these parties’ internationalism. A conceptual framework needs to be developed which permits us to grasp the specific quality of these parties’ internationalism, and to identify the factors that shape it.

Historically, internationalism as a doctrine and a discourse has had many different faces and has appeared in many different contexts—socialist movements since the late nineteenth century, trade union movements, Third World movements, the new Left... The internationalism which will be studied here is a specific one, embedded in the context of the Soviet-aligned communist world during the Cold War, professed and applied by the communist parties in Western Europe. Since their formation in the 1920s, the communist parties of Western Europe were ideologically and politically linked to the Soviet Union and to what they understood as a
global movement of “the forces of socialism,” the structure and status of which changed over time. The official doctrine underpinning these political and ideological ties was (proletarian) internationalism. The doctrine originated with the publication in 1848, by K. Marx and F. Engels, of the Manifesto of the Communist Party and its famous slogan: “Workers of all countries, unite!”\footnote{34} It was argued that, as capitalism and the economic interests of the bourgeoisie transcended national boundaries, the working classes should not fall into the fatal trap of pursuing a national(ist) agenda, but their solidarity and political action should be located at the international level. The workers’ true interests lie with their class rather than with their nation. It is impossible to overestimate the importance to communist thinking in all its varieties, of this insight and of the internationalist principle. Proletarian internationalism was a constitutive doctrine of what was to become the Marxist-Leninist “orthodoxy” of Soviet-aligned communism in the twentieth century.\footnote{35} Marxist-Leninist ideology, in its Soviet-defined version, consisted of a number of doctrines, among which were three with a more important status: proletarian internationalism, or the underpinning of allegiance between communist parties worldwide; the “dictatorship of the proletariat”, which defined the organization of socialist society and its political system; and “democratic centralism”, which regulated the internal organization and politics of the party.\footnote{36}

On the level of doctrine and discourse, the term (proletarian) internationalism, although introduced by Marx and frequently used by Lenin during the revolutionary period, was not an explicit element of the regular doctrinal arsenal of Soviet theorists and policy makers up to 1953.\footnote{37} Under Khrushchev it was used somewhat more often, although only marginally to justify the invasion of Hungary in 1956. It was only under Brezhnev, and particularly after the Czechoslovak crisis and with the formulation in late 1968 of what became known in the West as the “Brezhnev Doctrine,” that proletarian internationalism became a consciously established element of Soviet communist theory. Internationalism became increasingly important in Soviet theory, until, in 1976, it was defined as “the most important principle of Marxism-Leninism.”\footnote{38} The present study will illustrate how internationalism only started to be invoked as a theory after its self-evident, automatic legitimacy had started to fade.
In practice, the doctrine of proletarian internationalism had, since Lenin, served primarily as a theoretical device for justifying submission to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), and as a justification for the latter’s dominance over, and right to interfere in, the communist parties of the world. A relation of power and (political, ideological, material) dependence existed between the Soviet Union on the one hand, and the (East and West) European communist parties on the other, from the 1920s onwards up to the end of Soviet communism. This was the central and continuous element of internationalism, despite the important changes that occurred over time and the differences across cases. The subordination of communist parties worldwide to the Soviet Union was understood in these parties not as a regrettable “deviation” from the doctrine of internationalism. It was instead located at the heart of this doctrine throughout the history of the Soviet-aligned communist world. The fact that internationalism meant—in one way or another and to some extent—the defense of the interests of the Soviet Union as the first socialist state, was not understood as being in contradiction with what we might see as the more genuine significance of internationalism as international solidarity between the working classes.

Soviet-aligned internationalism became a problem for West European communism in the aftermath of the Second World War in a way that had not previously been the case. In 1947–1948, the PCI and PCF shifted rapidly away from involvement in broad anti-fascist alliances and from co-operation with non-communist forces in coalition governments, towards systematic opposition to the domestic and international order in which they operated. This shift was the direct result of pressures coming from the Soviet Union and the communist world, which, in 1947, at the founding meeting of the Cominform, adopted the Zhdanovian vision of a bipolar world. In 1949, the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty, the communist take-over in Czechoslovakia, and the division of Europe led to a situation in which West European communist parties were excluded from government. From that moment on, the internationalism of West European communist parties was based not only on the fundamental rejection of the liberal-capitalist national systems in which they operated, but also of the international alignment of their countries. In the 1960s and 1970s, the situation was gradually unlocked: while the PCI and PCF continued to be excluded from actual government power, their domestic isolation was partially remedied in social and cultural terms. Terms, the breakdown of systematic anti-communism in the early 1960s made it possible for the PCI and
PCF to exercise power in local government, and to have more visible impacts on national policies through their parliamentary representation.

In organizational terms, internationalism after 1956 was embodied in the so-called world communist movement (WCM). Although it was more abstract and less tangible than the preceding forms of world communist organization such as the Comintern and the Cominform, the “world communist movement” constituted a reality in the minds of those who were part of it, with concrete rules of behavior and modes of interaction. From the 1960s onwards, the WCM included three groups of communist parties: those in power in the socialist countries; those in opposition or underground in the capitalist world; and, from the 1960s onwards, Marxist-inspired movements of national liberation in the Third World. It also included a number of “non-political” bodies such as the World Peace Council, the World Federation of Democratic Youth, the World Student Union and the World Trade Union Confederation (the latter two had their headquarters in Prague). The term “world communist movement” will be used here in the same way as it was used by the communist parties. However, attention will be focused on the contradictions and shifts in the definition of the term, as reflecting the deeper-lying questions of its doctrinal and strategic boundaries. While the world communist movement organized the communist parties of the world and was primarily an ideological organization prescribing “orthodox” doctrine, the communist bloc during the Cold War included only the socialist states and referred to the economic, commercial, military and political relations between them. The “movement” was wider and more diverse than the “bloc.” In this study, communist bloc will be used to refer to the system of (Soviet-aligned) socialist states and their institutions, such as the Warsaw Pact (Warsaw Treaty Organisation, WTO) and the Comecon (Council of Mutual Economic Assistance, CMEA). As will become clear, in moments of crisis such as 1968–1969, the Soviet Union understood the movement’s role as providing crucial ideological underpinning and political support to the bloc.

2.2. Internationalism: a working concept

Internationalism is understood here as coinciding neither entirely with the discourse and theory of internationalism as used among communists themselves, nor exclusively with the practical policies of communist parties on the international scene. Rather, it focuses on the tension between them. This concept here proposes a way of escaping some of the dangers
connected to the study of internationalism discussed above, by distinguishing between the identity quality of communism, which can be understood as an imperative and a void mental structure (a), and the concrete substance of it, consisting of three dimensions (b).

(a) Internationalism in the most basic sense was one element of the core identity of being a communist. In the phrase of A. Kriegel, it was one of the “invariables of communism.” The way I understand this is not that internationalism did not vary over time and space, but that adhering to it was one of the essential preconditions for calling oneself a communist. Internationalism as a matter of identity can be described on the basis of certain established theories on the construction of collective identities. A first condition for the construction of an identity is the mechanism of including and excluding, and the distinction between those who belong and those who do not belong. What is essential is the imagining of, and the belonging to, a community of forces striving towards revolution and socialism, on the national level (the party) as well as on the global level (the “world communist movement”). The Soviet Union assumed a privileged position in this movement. This was so not only because its communist party claimed to bear the heritage of the first communist revolution, of Lenin and of Bolshevism, but also because the Soviet Union was the first socialist state. The perceived importance of the Soviet Union as a state in the global battle against capitalism took on a new and greater meaning in the 1960s and 1970s, in the post-colonial order and in the context of the rise of anti-imperialist movements worldwide, as the Soviet Union was understood to constitute the major actor in the global “battle against imperialism.”

Furthermore, internationalism as a matter of identity involved an understanding of time, and a specific relation to the past and to the future. The particular understanding of history, based on historical materialism, implied that a historically inevitable process would lead to the eventual victory of socialism. The Bolshevik revolution of 1917 was considered the first and crucial historical fact in this process. The (observed) existence of socialist regimes in itself proved that the global march towards socialism was underway. To be a communist meant to be convinced that an evolution towards socialism was objectively taking place. This evolution was at once universal and inevitable, which is why there was a close link between the final goal, the “horizon” or teleology of communism on the one hand,
and internationalism on the other. Internationalism was always invoked to
remind communists of the teleology, and the teleology was unthinkable if
not as an international project.

Finally, there was a close link between internationalism as an identity,
and the unit of action and organization—namely, the communist party. There
was, in the minds of the West European communist leaders and mil-
itants, a direct line from the growth and the unity of their party, to the ulti-
mate horizon of world socialism. Maintaining party unity made little sense
when not backed by a powerful and unified global communist movement.
In turn, affirming party identity was very difficult in the absence of a well-
defined identity of the communist world. The party as an organization was
loaded with messianic significance and directly referred to the ultimate
horizon of socialism. In Marxist-Leninist thought, the party represented
the vehicle for revolution, the self-conscious agent of history, and the
prefiguration of the future socialist society. It was through the develop-
ment of the party, according to certain rules, that the construction of
socialism was already taking place. To the West European communist
parties during the Cold War, who were “in attendance” to socialism in
their countries, a specific importance was accorded to the party, as it was
the only locus of socialism and revolution. This is why, when communist
identity was under pressure, as in 1968, the evocation of internationalism
got hand in hand with a call for party unity, and “closing-of-the-ranks”
mechanisms dominated.

(b) Beyond the general quality of internationalism as a matter of iden-
tity, internationalism has corresponded to a variety of realities, although
within limits. These varieties of internationalism will be studied here in two
ways: firstly, by comparing the PCI and the PCF; and secondly by looking
at the historical changes that took place under the influence of the Czecho-
slovak crisis of 1968–69. The concrete substance and orientation of interna-
tionalism, as expressed through the choices made by parties such as the PCI
and PCF, can be understood as consisting of three dimensions: belonging to
a global movement, participating in a global strategy, and adhering to a com-
mon doctrine. Thus, the nature of the internationalism of the PCI and the
PCF will be studied by addressing the following three questions:
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1. What was their conception of the global movement to which they belonged, in terms of the boundaries of this movement and in terms of the relations between its members, and how did these parties in practice position themselves in this movement?

2. To what extent and in what ways did these parties consider their domestic strategies to be part of the overall, global strategy of this movement, and how did they envisage their specific role in it?

3. To what extent and in what ways did these parties adhere to the doctrine which was, at least officially, common to this movement, and how did they relate to the socialist regimes as points of reference for the very definition of socialism?

In the Soviet-aligned communist world, each of the three dimensions of internationalism was related to a theory and a principle of operation, which privileged the Soviet Union. The first dimension was related to a theory of the Soviet Communist Party playing a “leading role” in the communist world movement; this was downplayed from the 1960s onwards into a “privileged position.” The second dimension was related to a theory of the “determining weight” of the Soviet Union as a state in the global struggle against capitalism and imperialism—increasingly important from the 1960s onwards. The third dimension was related to a theory of the model of the Soviet Union as a socialist society and the Bolshevik revolution as a model for revolution, and their supposedly universal value. As will be illustrated below, the socialist regimes, and especially the Soviet Union, remained important points of reference for the definition of socialism despite the development of limited forms of criticism of these regimes by the West European communist parties from the 1960s onwards.

The development of internationalism in the PCF and PCI will be studied here by focusing on these three dimensions, the changes taking place in each of them, and the shifting relations between them. The mechanism at work in moments of crisis such as the invasion of Czechoslovakia can be described as follows. The identity quality urgently came to the surface when all three dimensions of internationalism were challenged and questioned simultaneously. When this happened, the communist parties displayed a strong and acute need to re-affirm this central aspect of their identity, by distinguishing sharply between the included and the excluded, by referring to the teleology, by evoking the shared myths and symbols, and by focusing on the coherence of the organization. At a further stage, internationalism
as a matter of identity was saved by the introduction of changes in one or more of the three dimensions, or in terms of the relations between them. The analysis below will illustrate concretely how these mechanisms operated throughout the Czechoslovak crisis of 1968–1969, and what the longer-term effects were.

2.3. The comparison: PCI and PCF

The usefulness of approaching the history of communist parties in a comparative way has often been noted in the literature. Looking at the varieties in communism over space and time permits us to emphasize the context-dependency of communism, as well as to discern some constants. The comparative method here is one which contrasts contexts: the different nature and development of the internationalism of the PCI and the PCF will be compared and explained by contrasting the different contexts in which these parties operated. There exists a tradition of comparing the Italian and French communist parties, in particular in the Anglo-Saxon and, to a lesser extent, French literature. While G. Lavau has referred to the comparison of the PCF and PCI as a “classic exercise for students of politology,” M. Lazar’s *Maisons rouges* was the first encompassing attempt to compare the post-war histories of the PCI and the PCF. Here, the PCI and PCF have been chosen, firstly, for the fact that they were the two largest communist parties operating in pluralist democracies during the Cold War, in terms of adherence figures and votes. As such, they had an influence on the smaller West European communist parties, and in some respects determined the fate of West European communism as a whole—an issue which will be dealt with at various points in this study. A second reason behind the choice of the cases is their “extreme” character. Among the West European communist parties they often, though certainly not always, held the most extreme positions regarding internationalism. This was the case around 1956, and once more in 1969–1970, in the aftermath of the Czechoslovak crisis. It was not the case, however, around the mid-1960s and in the second half of the 1970s. The patterns of the approaching and the widening of the positions of the PCI and the PCF on various aspects of internationalism runs like a red thread throughout this study.

One aim of this comparison is to problematize the commonplace understanding of the “more internationalist” PCF and the “more domestic” PCI. Admittedly, it is impossible to deny that the overall historical development of the PCI tended towards taking more distance from the Soviet-
aligned communist world, while the PCF maintained throughout the Cold War a very high degree of loyalty to the world communist movement. Moreover, the years 1968–1969 seem, in the case of the PCI, to have been a crucial step towards further fundamental changes in its internationalism and in distancing itself from the communist world, while in the case of the PCF, the developments of 1968–1969 seem to have led to a far-reaching realignment of the party in the communist world movement and on Soviet terms. These differences will be understood here in qualitative rather than quantitative terms. It is the specific logic of each party’s internationalism which will be sought, as well as its coming about in a specific domestic context and the sources of political legitimation on which it could be based.

2.4. National and international belonging: sources of legitimation

It can fairly be assumed that, during the Cold War, the ties which West European communist parties maintained with the socialist regimes negatively affected their domestic position. Nonetheless, the history of communism in Western Europe cannot be understood without bearing in mind that, in specific contexts, internationalism and reference to the Soviet Union and to world communism were sources of legitimation on the domestic level. Many sources of legitimation could be considered: the perspective of radically upsetting the socioeconomic order; the communist share in the victory over Nazi Germany and Italian Fascism; an alternative to the dependence of Western Europe on the United States; and so on. The focus here will be on the following three sources of legitimation: revolution, anti-fascism and anti-imperialism. The first two have been identified in the case of the PCI by the Italian historian De Felice. It seems necessary, for the 1960s and 1970s, the era of decolonization, to grant similar attention to anti-imperialism. The focus on sources of legitimation will not only help to structure the comparative analysis of the PCI and PCF and their domestic settings, it will also serve to identify some longer-term differences between the traditions of the Italian and French Left. Internationalism as a source of legitimation on the domestic level proposed solutions to a number of problems perceived in the political, cultural and socioeconomic order. The communist parties were constantly engaged in political battles with other political actors for the “occupation” and appropriation of these sources of legitimation. These battles mostly involved political formations of the Left, although, as the French case in particular will show, not only those. The sources of legitimation were most powerful when they referred at once to
the domestic and to the international situation of the country. While, generally, revolution was the more important one to the PCF during the period studied here, to the PCI anti-fascism (referring foremost to the domestic situation) and anti-imperialism (referring rather to the international situation) were more significant.

As De Felice has demonstrated, Soviet-aligned internationalism was able, in the aftermath of the Second World War, to become a source of legitimation on the domestic level because of the two major historic successes of the Soviet Union: the Bolshevik October Revolution of 1917 and the allied victory over Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy in 1945. The concept of revolution took on opposite meanings in the two cases studied here. The conception of revolution in the PCF was at once national and international. It was based on the historical perception of a “modern revolutionary cycle,” which had originated in 1789 with the French Revolution, and of which the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution was the most recent incarnation. Also, the revolution of 1848 and the Paris Commune of 1871 were considered part of this historical movement. There were two ways in which 1789 lay at the origins of 1917: as a model and a point of reference for what revolution actually was, and as a moment of rupture in the course of history. In the PCF’s understanding, being a French communist meant continuing this movement and bringing the French revolutionary tradition “back” to France. With this concept, the PCF made universalist claims: the 1789–1917 link constituted the universal point of reference for revolutions around the globe. This was not only a matter of French perceptions; the Bolsheviks in 1917 also amply referred to the French Revolution and the Paris Commune. The universalist dimension, in its concept of revolution, reflects a more general feature of French national self-understanding as a universal nation. The French nation, had come to think of itself as a universal nation, whose pattern of development bore wider significance for other nations in Europe and the world.

The understanding of the nation and its historical development was characterized on the Italian Left, and in the PCI specifically, by a sense of particularism. The PCI leadership in the 1960s and 1970s had deeply absorbed some of the views of the communist thinker and co-founder of the PCI in the 1920s, Antonio Gramsci, on national and international revolution. In their interpretation of these views, Italian unification in the second half of the nineteenth century, the Risorgimento, was an incomplete or an atypical revolution, which deviated from the “classic” (French) model. The experience of fascism and the situation at the outcome of the Second
World War only added to the general sense of particularity. Hence, it was not inconceivable that the socialist revolution in Italy would also differ from the existing schemes and models. The possibility of specific types of revolution was fully endorsed by the Italian communists, before it was officially recognized by Soviet doctrine.\textsuperscript{61} Hence, while revolution to the PCF was at once a national and a universally valid concept, to the PCI it referred more exclusively to the national level, at least in terms of the pattern of development or the “road” to socialism.

Anti-fascism, although in a very specific way referring to the Italian case, can also be considered as a source of legitimation in the case of the PCF and West European communism as a whole, if viewed in a broad sense: an identity embedded in the traumatic experiences of the Second World War, that is to say the establishment of right-wing dictatorial regimes, foreign occupation, military violence, resistance and a quasi civil war situation. In West European communist discourses after the Second World War, an amalgamation took place between different historical and contemporary types of fascism: Mussolini’s Fascism, the Nazi regime, Francoism, contemporary formations of the far Right, and so on. The creation of a negative identity such as anti-fascism served to identify the main enemy and to outline the possible alliances.\textsuperscript{62} In the Italian case, anti-fascism referred foremost to a national phenomenon, and to a lesser extent to an international one. Not only did it refer to the Italian fascist past, but also to the persistence throughout the Cold War of far-Right political parties.

The PCF also widely used anti-fascist slogans and symbols. However, these referred rather to a European phenomenon and to the struggle on a global level. As we will see, after the Second World War the party had difficulties in constructing a powerful argument on the domestic “fascist danger.” Thus, the “fascist danger” was projected to the outside world. Protection from this danger was needed by the French people—in a double meaning, as a nation and as a class.\textsuperscript{63} Anti-fascism transformed, on the one hand, into anti-German feelings, and to national sovereignty on the other devotion. Thus, internationalism in the PCF case, after the Second World War, was able to grow on patriotic feelings. The tight, although contradictory, link between the PCF’s Soviet-aligned internationalism and its national(ist) character went, to some extent, back to the mid-1930s, when, as the direct result of orders from Moscow, the PCF took on a strongly patriotic discourse and identity and embarked upon the Popular Front strategy. The major role played by the PCF in the resistance after 1941, and the cultiva-
tion of the memory of this after the Second World War, permitted the party to present itself as a genuinely national force.64

At the end of the war, the two main political actors, the PCF and General de Gaulle, competed with each other in their identification with the resistance, and hence, in their self-understanding as the genuine defenders of the interests of the nation.65 However, while it was at the heart of Gaullist strategy to present the image of a sovereign France, independent from international ties, the PCF, with its strong international ties, represented an anomaly on the French political scene.66 In this context it needed to convince the French public that its international alliance served, first of all, national interests.

To the PCI, national sovereignty was less important as a source of legitimation. This should be understood in the context of the onset of the Cold War. As De Felice has argued in the Italian case, at the outcome of the Second World War, in the context of a political crisis which was national and moral in character, the political élites, and in particular the two main political actors, the PCI and the Christian Democratic Party (Democrazia cristiana, DC), developed at once national and international/ideological bonds of loyalty. These international loyalties left both the PCI and the DC in a position of dependence, and limited Italy’s sovereignty as a state.67 This led to a situation in which state loyalties were combined with other forms of loyalties.

Anti-imperialism, although of central importance in communist and leftist discourses in the 1960s and 1970s, has received surprisingly little attention in the literature on West European communism. In this period, both the PCI and PCF widely used anti-imperialist slogans. Communist anti-imperialism found its theoretical origins in the definition by Lenin of imperialism as “the supreme stage of capitalism.” From the late 1950s onwards, starting with the Suez crisis in 1956 and increasingly so in the 1960s and 1970s, the Soviet-aligned communist world identified with the decolonization and national liberation movements, in an attempt to win these for its cause. The conference of communist parties of the world, held in 1960, provided theoretical underpinning for the anti-imperialist strategy. Supporting “national-democratic states” and “revolutionary-democratic states” in the battles for decolonization was understood as an all-important way to combat global capitalism.68 As used by the communist parties of Western Europe in the 1960s and 1970s, anti-imperialism was a powerful tool because it referred at once to the Cold War situation of Western Europe,
to the struggles for liberation in the Third World, and to American intervention worldwide. Insofar as it referred to the Third World, both parties identified with the movements of national liberation, although, as will become clear, in the case of the PCF this had been highly problematized by the Algerian war in the late 1950s.

Insofar as it referred to the Cold War situation, anti-imperialism was linked to anti-Americanism. Anti-Americanism was a powerful discourse in Western Europe in the 1960s, for a combination of reasons: Western Europe being part of the American sphere of influence; US global policy and the escalation of the Vietnam War; and the cultural and socioeconomic model it represented. Following the analysis of the global situation at the onset of the Cold War by the Soviet Union and by the Cominform, both the PCI and PCF defined the United States as imperialist. Despite the distance taken by Gaullist France from the Atlantic alliance in the 1960s, the understanding that France was a country victim to American imperialism was kept alive on the Left throughout the 1960s. As it was tightly connected to the question of sovereignty, the PCF presented itself as the defender of national sovereignty by attacking the country’s ties with the Western sphere of alliance. By contrast, in the case of the PCI, anti-Americanism in the 1970s decreased sharply, at least as far as the opinions of the leadership and the official discourses were concerned. At the same time, imperialism, referring to the Third World, became an increasingly important element of the party’s internationalism. The analysis below will demonstrate the connections between these shifts and the Czechoslovak crisis of 1968.

3. THE CZECHOSLOVAK CRISIS IN THE LONGER TERM

3.1. The Czechoslovak crisis in the history of the communist world and the Cold War

The impact of the Czechoslovak crisis on the world communist movement and on the communist bloc will be looked at here on different levels. Recent analyses in the literature distinguish, firstly, between the short term and the long term; and secondly between the political situation in terms of relations between the socialist states, and the underlying crisis of legitimation and ideology. One widely accepted interpretation is that, in the short term, the invasion of Czechoslovakia largely put an end to the many rup-
tures and cleavages that existed among the socialist states of Europe and the challenges to Soviet hegemony that occurred in that decade. The many political, economic and military conflicts between the European socialist states in the 1960s were “resolved” by restoring a higher degree of Soviet dominance and by forceful “integration,” specifically through the reform and reorganization of the main institutions of the communist bloc, the Warsaw Pact and the Comecon. During the 1960s, resistance from several socialist states had blocked Soviet attempts at domination.

In the longer term, however, the damage that the Czechoslovak crisis inflicted upon communism as an identity, an ideology and a myth system was grave. A profound and lasting crisis of legitimacy of communism was the result, which affected the national communist leaderships domestically as well as the Soviet Union as hegemon of the communist world. As far as the so-called People’s Democracies in Eastern Europe were concerned, the crushing of the Prague Spring put an end to hopes of the possibility of reform communism or “socialism with a human face” inside the Soviet-dominated bloc. This became more evident after 1968 than it had been after the crushing of the Hungarian uprising of 1956, because the Prague Spring defined itself explicitly as a communist development: while the communist party leadership played a central role, it at no point explicitly questioned its basic international orientation. The failure of reform communism led to a situation in which the communist leaderships in Eastern Europe had increasing difficulty in constructing a national consensus on the basis of communist ideology or of the myth system. The East European and Soviet regimes had to cope, throughout the 1970s and 1980s, with permanent forms of domestic dissidence.

The crushing of the Prague Spring and the Soviet-enforced “normalization” of the country after 1968 also helped to undermine the legitimacy of the European communist regimes in a more specific sense. Among the communist leaderships of the people’s democracies, the Czechoslovak Communist Party (CPCS) was the one which, before 1968, could most rightly claim domestic legitimacy. Communism in Czechoslovakia, more so than in other parts of Eastern Europe, had profound domestic roots and had been an important political and intellectual tradition in the interwar period and up to 1945. Although, during the 1950s and 1960s, the “national” tradition in Czechoslovak communism was replaced by complete adherence to the Soviet model and Stalinist rule, and the country was a loyal satellite of the Soviet Union, the CPCS remained more strongly implanted in its own soci-
ety than any other of the communist parties in the people’s democracies. The crushing of the Prague Spring and the purging of the CPCS afterwards thus symbolized the impossibility of connecting Soviet-aligned communist rule to national political and cultural traditions and of presenting it as a legitimate form of domestic rule. In the same way that the national communist leaderships needed to make use of (the threat of) repression to control their societies, the Soviet Union needed the threat of military invasion to control the communist bloc. It had become painfully clear through the invasion in 1968 that disagreements could arise among socialist regimes and communist parties—a situation which, in theory and in doctrine, was not possible. The invasion of 1968 was the admittance that Soviet-style communism could only rely on military power to enforce discipline and unity. It also demonstrated that no consensus existed on the concept of socialism and on the limits to acceptable “national variations.” The increased emphasis on the doctrines of proletarian and socialist internationalism after 1968 in Soviet theory noted above can be regarded as illustrative of the acknowledgement that these types of “solidarity” could not be taken for granted but needed to be enforced by the threat of repression.

Although the problem of the legitimation of communism became more urgent after 1968, it found its origins in the de-Stalinization of 1956. The crisis in communist rule after 1956 has been understood, in more than one interpretation, in terms of the disintegration of communism as an ideology, a belief and myth system, and in a shift towards pragmatic power politics. The disintegration of the myth system started in 1956: the de-Stalinization in 1956 was an attempt to save the myth of 1917 and the Leninist heritage by denouncing and demystifying Stalinism and its excesses. A similar mechanism of demystification occurred after 1968, as the Brezhnev leadership introduced the term “really existing socialism.” The purpose of this term was to reshape the myth of the Soviet Union to “earthly” dimensions, in order to salvage it. These mechanisms in the long run undermined the myth quality of the Soviet Union and, indirectly, of the global movement which it led. In the analysis here, 1956 will also be taken as a point of reference: I shall demonstrate how it created a basic problem of communist identity, touching upon all three dimensions of internationalism as introduced above. The Czechoslovak crisis of 1968–1969 directly referred back to it.

The significance of the Czechoslovak crisis on the longer-term development of the Cold War and détente, too, needs to be diversified. It has often been noted that the invasion of Czechoslovakia did not significantly disrupt
the process of détente and the improvement of East–West relations. Recent archive-based analyses tend to underscore the interpretation that the Czechoslovak crisis, while it did not upset East–West détente, changed it. Between 1962 and 1968, détente on the European continent involved various state and non-state actors, and led to a rapid multiplication of economic, commercial and cultural ties across the Iron Curtain. The Czechoslovak crisis was, partly, the result of European détente. As we will see below, it was able to come about in a context of multiple cleavages inside the communist bloc and was inspired by pan-European ideas. One important reason why the Prague Spring was crushed was that it threatened to upset the bipolar order in Europe. As the communist takeover in 1948 had contributed to making the division of Europe irreversible, a regime change in Czechoslovakia, at the heart of Europe, threatened once more to destabilize the European order.

After 1968, détente became more similar to a form of traditional balance of power politics, involving the most powerful global actors: the United States, the Soviet Union, and to a lesser extent China and the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). The interests of these governments in some ways converged after 1968: in terms of security, trade, the preservation of bloc coherence, and, after the sudden outburst of social and political protests across the world in 1968, the preservation of the domestic order. The Czechoslovak crisis was one element which contributed to this change by restoring Soviet hegemony over the communist bloc and by demonstrating the acceptance of this by the Western powers. After the Czechoslovak crisis, the communist regimes of Eastern Europe were largely realigned on Soviet terms. While détente before 1968 had challenged communist bloc coherence and Soviet dominance over it, after 1969, through the “normalization” of the communist bloc, the Soviet Union was able to carry out détente largely on its own terms, thereby significantly less disturbed by internal bloc friction than before 1968.

3.2. West European communism and the Czechoslovak crisis

The ideology and sources of legitimation of West European communist parties were deeply affected by the events of 1956, and when they were faced once more with disruptive events in 1968, it were to some extent the same problems and questions which needed to be addressed. In 1956 the PCI and PCF responded by undertaking shifts in their internationalism on specific points and within certain limits. After 1956 these parties abandoned ele-
ments of the myth system common to world communism—although the PCI went much further in this than the PCF. This was the significance of their careful and limited criticism of the Soviet Union and the socialist regimes from the second half of the 1960s onwards. Doing so, they might have “saved,” in the short term, a core of the ideology and those aspects of their sources of legitimation which were not directly connected to world communism. The Czechoslovak crisis occurred at a moment in the histories of these parties when they were engaged in the processes of resetting the dimensions of internationalism and of their sources of legitimation. The PCI, during the 1960s, was undertaking important—although not always explicit—changes in doctrine, which touched not only upon the question of the “road” to socialism but also on the question of the very conception of socialism and revolution. Alongside this it had, since 1956, suggested alternative forms of organization of the communist world movement and was, moreover, engaged in reconsidering the foreign policy dimension of its internationalism, without this bringing it into open conflict with the Soviet Union. The PCF had only started to recover from the profound crisis of identity and legitimacy in which it had found itself in the late 1950s, due not only to the changes in the world communist movement but also to the domestic situation, namely, the return to power of de Gaulle and the Algerian war. While it was largely unwilling to revise “orthodox” doctrine and strategy vis-à-vis the West after 1956, its dissatisfaction with Soviet leadership over the movement and Soviet disregard of its domestic strategy around the mid-1960s brought it into conflict with the Soviet leaders by the mid-1960s.

The Czechoslovak crisis, then, touched upon all three dimensions of internationalism: relations between communist parties (and states), doctrine and the definition of “orthodoxy,” and Soviet strategic priorities in Europe. However, what was new with regard to 1956 was that now the issue of (Soviet and world communist) strategy had become the central one. It was shared by the PCI, PCF and all the Western communist parties. The invasion of Czechoslovakia directly provoked the question of whether détente, in the Soviet conception of it, was beneficial to revolution and socialist transformation in the West. Détente posed an ambivalent challenge to the West European communist parties. While the situation of European détente, as it came about in the 1960s and was continued in the 1970s, was largely positive for their domestic situation, this was not necessarily the case for the Soviet conception of it. It will be demonstrated here that the invasion of Czechoslovakia made it clear to the West European communist
parties that, in the Soviet conception, détente was not supportive of the transition to socialism in Western Europe. This understanding was formulated differently in both parties and originated from very different domestic situations and strategic conceptions and from very different historical ways of relating to the Soviet strategy of peaceful coexistence. Nonetheless, it led both parties to converge in their critique of the Soviet Union and in their attempts to change modes of operation inside the world communist movement. This strategic problem remained unresolved for both parties up to the end of the Cold War.

Alongside the strategic problem, during the Czechoslovak crisis the PCF experienced a conflict with the world communist movement and the Soviet Union in terms of the organization and the concept of the world communist movement, while the PCI’s conflict was in terms of orthodoxy and doctrine. It will be argued that, as a result of this multiple (though partly hidden) conflict with the Soviet Union and the world communist movement, the PCI and, to a lesser extent, the PCF undertook changes in their internationalism. These changes occurred in connection with shifts in their sources of legitimation and within the limits imposed on them by the world communist movement. While these changes created new contradictions, the PCF and, especially, the PCI benefited from these changes in a first phase in terms of domestic legitimation. This explains the relative success of both parties on the domestic level in the first half of the 1970s. Paradoxically, the crisis in which Soviet-aligned communism in Western Europe found itself in the late 1960s—due to both the Czechoslovak crisis and the rise of the new Left and new forms of radicalism—developed into a period of relative success for West European communism as a whole in the 1970s. The literature dealing with the longer-term development of West European communism and the West European Left generally has not yet found satisfactory explanations for the relative success of Soviet-aligned communism in this phase. This will be explained here as the result of these parties’ ability to maintain, or even expand, their sources of legitimation in connection to the shifts in their internationalism. Furthermore, the conditions of world communism and of détente in the early 1970s did not bring the contradictions in their post-1968 internationalism to the surface in an acute way.

The problem of the impact of the Czechoslovak crisis on the longer-term history of the West European communist parties directly raises the question of Eurocommunism. The connection between the dissent over the invasion of Czechoslovakia and Eurocommunism nearly ten years later has
often been observed. The widely accepted thesis is that the Czechoslovak crisis caused Eurocommunism, or that it was the start of Eurocommunism.\(^{87}\) Indeed, in the light of the interpretation of the longer-term impact of Czechoslovakia on the communist world presented above, the emergence of Eurocommunism reflected the more general crisis of the legitimacy of communist rule which had already surfaced in 1968. It did so because it was made clear that it was only possible for out-of-government communist parties to be openly “heterodox,” because these parties were not subject to the threat of military intervention as a basis of “unity” after 1968, unlike the communist parties in government and the societies subject to them. However, the thesis of the immediate link fails to explain why, if Czechoslovakia was its immediate cause, Eurocommunism did not come about in 1969. It fails to see the importance of the post-1968 process of “realignment,” of which the PCI and PCF were part. Eurocommunism rather reflected the strategic problem which internationalism posed to West European communist parties, and which had already emerged in 1968. A specific set of domestic and international conditions around 1975 brought the strategic conflict with the Soviet Union to the surface once more, but also revealed the limits and the contradictions of the changes that both the PCI and PCF had undertaken after 1968.

4. INTRODUCING THE CONTEXTS

The changes in the internationalism of both parties will be explained as resulting from changes taking place in three interconnected contexts:

1. developments in the so-called “world communist movement”
2. domestic political developments and the interactions between political parties and groups
3. international relations and the development of the Cold War on the European continent

The first context, the world communist movement, has a different status in the analysis than the other two: it set out the limits to possible change in the internationalism of the PCI and the PCF. The analysis of the Czechoslovak crisis clearly demonstrates where these limits lay, and through which mechanisms they were imposed. The two remaining contexts impacted
upon the PCI and PCF by pushing their internationalism in one direction or another, within these limits.

4.1. The “world communist movement”

In organizational terms, the world communist movement consisted of a network of formal and informal contacts, maintained through international conferences, exchanges of top party delegations on occasion of national party congresses and ceremonies, study exchanges by middle and lower party ranks, and exchanges of party publications and press. The PCI, the PCF and most of the West European communist parties considered themselves a part of this movement. The position of the West European communist parties in the world communist movement depended largely, though not solely, on the attitude of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (and to a lesser extent on that of the other ruling East European communist parties) towards them. The Soviet attitude towards these parties was largely a matter of traditions and customs, but also of its geopolitical calculations as a superpower.

A number of general characteristics in the attitudes of the world communist movement and the Soviet Communist Party towards the West European parties can be discerned, despite important variations. These attitudes reflected the importance accorded by the Soviet Union to West European communism. The “general tasks” which were attributed by the world communist movement and the Soviet Union to the West European communist parties constituted the strategic and doctrinal framework within which these parties operated, although they responded to these in differentiated and, in the 1960s, sometimes negative ways. The specific tasks of the West European “front,” as understood by the Soviet and world communist leaders, were always functional to the broader strategic orientations of the communist bloc. These tasks can be identified as:

- in the WCM: to construct “unity” in the movement, to aid Soviet dominance over it and to help it maintain “orthodoxy”; after 1960, to combat the influence of Maoism
- with respect to European strategy: to cause cracks in the Atlantic alliance system and to exert pressure towards the demilitarization of Western Europe, through influencing public opinion and via parliamentary institutions; to propagate the recognition of the post-war German borders and the recognition of the German Democratic Republic (GDR)
• with respect to global strategy: to increase the prestige of the Soviet
Union and communism in general; to support its foreign policy; to
support (Soviet-aligned) revolutionary movements around the globe,
particularly in Vietnam
• domestically: to expand their political influence in state institutions
and elsewhere; to create or maintain alliances in which they played a
dominant role; to expand their influence over social movements such
as the peace movement, and over public opinion in general.

The dependency of the West European communist parties on the Soviet
Communist Party and the world communist movement was not only ideo-
logical and strategic, there was also a material aspect to it. While the “gold
from Moscow” has long remained a mystery, it is now possible to draw a
general picture of the dimensions of the financial support given by the
Soviet Union. To a lesser extent, other East European communist regimes
also materially supported the West European “brother parties.” Economic
links also existed through commercial and financial enterprises.90
Material support took place furthermore via support to the party press
(massive subscriptions by the Soviets to the periodicals of the “brother par-
ties”), and via the trade unions.91 The position of the communist parties in
the world communist movement, however, was not only determined by the
ways in which the dominant actors of this movement related to them, but
also by their own vision of their role inside it. This was largely a matter of
tradition. As will be discussed in chapters two and three, in this respect,
too, the PCI and the PCF represent very different cases.

4.2. Domestic politics and society

Domestically, the West European communist parties were in the 1960s
above all faced with the visible successes of capitalist modernization. In
Italy, the “economic miracle” of the 1950s–1960s rapidly modernized the
economy and transformed it from a predominantly agrarian one into a
mixed industrial–agrarian economy. Overall national wealth increased rap-
idly but along very uneven patterns, in geographical as well as in sociologi-
cal terms. Massive immigration from the poverty-stricken south to the
industrialized north of the country occurred, and was one of the causes
behind the political radicalization of the workers in the 1960s. In France, the
*Trentes glorieuses* were, equally, a period marked by rapid economic growth.
Economic modernization went hand in hand with the modernization of the
which socialists, whose détente?

political and administrational structures, and with the construction of a welfare state through the political economy, taxation and administrative innovation. These phenomena, as well as the rise of meritocracy, posed a threat to peasants as well as to unskilled workers. Changes took place in the composition of the working classes: in France more rapidly than in Italy, a stratum of skilled technicians and mid-level managers emerged, which differed from the “old” working class in terms of identity and interests. As, throughout the 1970s, the traditional working class diversified and, in France more clearly than in Italy, its share in the workforce diminished, the communist party needed to expand its implant in groups in society. The PCF’s reaction in the 1960s and 1970s to this diversification was characterized by a tension between attempts—at times successful—to incorporate different social strata, and its traditional self-image and culture as a party of industrial workers. The PCI made a more clear-cut choice to broaden its social base and increasingly turned its attention to the middle strata, including small shopkeepers, artisans and intellectuals, especially from the 1970s onwards.

The political elites of both countries, in the period from the late 1950s up to the late 1960s, were faced with the challenge of responding to these rapid economic and social changes, while preserving the post-war political order and avoiding potentially destabilizing radicalization. In France, the Fifth Republic established in 1958 and led by President Charles de Gaulle was a regime characterized by the concentration of power and a reduced role for parliament and for the political opposition. In this context, the parties of the opposition—primarily the communist and socialist parties—were pressured in the 1960s to create alliances. The Algerian war in the late 1950s posed serious problems of ideology, strategy and legitimacy to all parties of the Left, including the PCF. In Italy, the exclusion of the PCI from government led to a situation in which the altering of power was merely theoretical, and the Christian Democratic Party dominated government. The shift to a centre-left government coalition from the early 1960s onwards, which included the socialist party, gave rise to fundamental questions in the PCI as to how far the party should go in integrating into the existing party-political system. While both the PCI and PCF in this phase opted for a domestic strategy characterized by gradualism and reformism, the PCI went much further in coming to terms with pluralism than did the PCF, and, as a result, its concept of socialism underwent more significant changes.

As a result of the dramatic societal changes of the 1950s and 1960s, an unforeseen wave of political radicalization and socio-cultural protest occur-
red in both countries in the late 1960s. The French May '68, which occurred in a very sudden way, seemed at the time a serious threat to the political order. The political radicalization in Italy, although a less abrupt outburst, started earlier, lasted longer, and had deeper-reaching effects on Italian politics and society. The culmination of protest movements that occurred in 1968–1969 in nearly all Western societies, and in some communist ones, will be understood here not only as a chain of domestic processes, but also as a trans-national movement of protest against the existing global order. As far as the West was concerned, the protests of 1968 were first and foremost directed at American hegemony.\textsuperscript{95} The Prague Spring crisis, as we will see below, was, among other things, a protest movement against Soviet dominance. Domestically, the protest movements of 1968 in the West were directed not only against the existing political, socioeconomic and cultural order, but also against what they perceived as the “established opposition” against this order, namely, the political parties of the “old” Left. This included both the “reformist” (socialist and social democratic) and “revolutionary” (Soviet-aligned communist) strands of the traditional Left. The movements of the “new Left” called for a generational renewal of revolutionary potential, that is to say, they were not willing to insert themselves in a tradition which might have been revolutionary once, but which, in their view, was no longer so.\textsuperscript{96}

Regarding their relations with other forces on the Left, both the PCI and the PCF were subject, in the 1960s and 1970s, to contradictory pressures. They were torn between the option of reform strategies and alliances with reformist and socialist parties on the one hand, and the challenge coming from new kinds of radicalism. The pressure coming from mainstream politics and from political parties of the reformist Left, in general terms, led the communist parties to present themselves as acceptable government candidates and as democratic parties. In the 1960s, both parties made the fundamental choice for integration into the party-political system.\textsuperscript{97} With regard to internationalism, it led them to minimize the most visible signs of their international alignment. The rise of the new Left and the multiplication of radical leftist groups from the mid-1960s onwards generally had an opposite effect. Despite the differences among these groups they all developed a critique on the Soviet-aligned communist world for no longer being revolutionary and no longer striving towards global socialism. They pressured the communist parties to present themselves as genuinely revolutionary forces. The communist parties felt threatened by these groups in what they
considered as their monopoly on revolutionary politics and on radical criticism of the existing political and socioeconomic order. This questioned their teleology and their project, and led the communist parties, at times, to reaffirm their identity and their distinctiveness.

Moreover, there was an international(ist) dimension to this: groups such as the Maoists and Trotskyites were attacked by the Soviet-aligned communist world and considered “deviant.” The splits that had occurred in the communist world were reproduced on the Italian and French Left. In particular, in the context of the massive protests against American intervention in Vietnam in the second half of the 1960s, a competition existed in West European politics among forces of the Left for the “occupation” of international points of reference which could symbolise the march towards global revolution and global socialism. Invoking the teleology of their project, and, hence, their internationalism, was to the West European communist parties a way to demonstrate their revolutionary character.

4.3. The Cold War and détente

Any study on West European communism during the Cold War is a study on the Cold War: not only were these parties at the centre of attention at the onset of the Cold War in Europe, their mere existence was a disruption in the bipolar European order. However, the Cold War should not be understood as a static constellation which affected domestic political situations “from above.” Some of the recent literature has attempted to develop a concept of the Cold War that focuses on the interplay between international developments (diplomatic, economic and others), and political, socioeconomic and cultural developments within countries, involving state and non-state actors. The Cold War is understood here in a very broad sense, namely, as the interplay between, on the one hand, a global constellation of ideological, economic and military competition, and, on the other hand, ideological and political competitions on the national level. Of central importance to the West European communist parties, then, was the way in which the “balance of forces” in Europe interacted with the “domestic cold wars.” It will be illustrated below how the cases of Italy and France in the 1960s present very different, and indeed opposite, patterns of interaction in this respect.

The point of departure is that, after the onset of the Cold War in 1947, it was impossible for communist parties in Western Europe to enter government. This resulted from the international constellation and the fact of
Western Europe being part of the Atlantic sphere of influence, but also from the specific domestic political constellations. Although this was the case in Italy as well as France, the circumstances of it varied, as the former country was more strongly dependent in economic, political and military terms on the United States and the Atlantic alliance than the latter.99 During the 1960s and 1970s, the Cold War shifted to a situation of détente or thaw. While, as noted above, the literature has generally pointed at the positive effects of détente on West European communism, it will be argued here that détente caused a strategic impasse in West European communism. While, during the 1960s, détente in the short term helped the West European communist parties to escape their domestic isolation, the Czecho- slovak crisis acutely demonstrated the negative implications of détente to the strategy of these parties, and the way détente developed in the 1970s confirmed this. Since much uncertainty exists in the literature regarding the nature of détente, the definition of détente in this analysis needs to be clarified. Détente is understood here, rather than as a break with the Cold War, as a continuation of it by different means. It was characterized, firstly, by a declared willingness on behalf of both superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, to avoid nuclear conflict on a global scale, and secondly, by the increase of commercial, economic and cultural ties across the East–West divide, particularly in Europe. While the Cuban Missile crisis of 1962 is generally considered as the onset of détente, the visible effects of global détente in terms of agreements on disarmament occurred mostly after 1968. These were preceded by European détente, which was at its peak in 1965–1969. Originating in the Soviet strategy of peaceful coexistence with the West, launched in 1956, European détente was provoked by the initiation of Ostpolitik by Western Germany and by the rapprochement to the Soviet Union and the socialist regimes by the Gaullist government of France. Détente is generally considered to have come to a halt in 1979, with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.100

During the 1960s, the roles played by Italy and France in European détente were radically different. The effect of détente on the PCI and the PCF in the short term was, in some senses, opposite. It might be argued that, while the important change that took place in France’s strategic position in the East–West conflict in the 1960s dissuaded the PCF from undertaking major changes in its internationalism or identity, the absence of far-reaching change in the case of Italy in this respect pressured the PCI to undertake shifts in its internationalism. The Gaullist rapprochement to the
socialist regimes made it not very useful for the PCF, in terms of electoral benefit or domestic legitimation, to shift away from its pro-Soviet positions. French foreign policy seemed to open up the possibility of causing cracks in the bipolar European constellation, from which the PCF hoped it would benefit, without having dramatically to revise its internationalism. However, the fact that this did not happen caused a crisis in the party’s internationalism in the second half of the 1960s, and once again in the second half of the 1970s. In Italy, by contrast, after the breakaway of the socialist party (Partito socialista italiano, PSI) from the PCI and the communist world in 1956, the PCI was domestically isolated in terms of foreign policy positions. This, generally, made it more urgent for the PCI, if it wanted to present itself as a realistic government partner, to shift to less openly pro-Soviet positions. Moreover, the strategic changes in Europe led it to develop new views on Italy’s role in Europe and Europe’s role in the world.

Before 1968, early détente was characterized by disunity inside the two political-military blocs. This, however, changed after 1968. Due to the Czechoslovak crisis, but also to policy shifts by governments in the East and West in reaction to the “global uprising” of 1968, internal bloc unity was largely restored, although this was more strongly the case in the Soviet-dominated communist bloc than in the Western alliance. In France, de Gaulle’s presidency ended 1969 as the indirect result of the May 1968 events. Under his successors, G. Pompidou and V. Giscard d’Estaing during the 1970s, France did not entirely give up its policy of independence vis-à-vis the Western alliance, but, rather, the sting was taken out of the French challenge to NATO. Although West German Ostpolitik continued to cause worries among the other members of the Atlantic alliance, the agreements signed in the early 1970s between West Germany on the one hand and the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Poland and finally East Germany on the other, largely reassured skeptics on both sides of the Iron Curtain.

A central issue in the debates on détente in the West during the 1970s regarded the question of whether it would primarily be carried out “from above,” between states, or “from below,” involving contacts across the blocs between civil society groups. While, especially in Europe, the necessity of both dimensions was acknowledged, the short-term effects of détente in the 1970s were most visible in its “top-down” dimension. The settlement of the German problem in the early 1970s, as well as the signing of the Helsinki agreements in 1975, primarily hinted at the fact that peace
in Europe was achieved through the acceptance, by all powers, of the con-
tinued division of the continent. Although, in retrospect, détente in the
1970s also created the conditions in which change “from below” in Eastern
Europe could occur, one effect which détente did not have was to bring
about radical regime change in Western Europe. It is from this angle that
the problems connected to the internationalism of the West European com-
munist parties will be analyzed here.

NOTES

1 For reasons of legibility, I will henceforth use “internationalism” rather than
“proletarian” or “communist internationalism.” Unless otherwise stated, the
term “internationalism” refers in this study always to the internationalism of
the Soviet-aligned communist parties.
2 Useful discussions of the historiography of West European communist parties
can be found in Aga-Rossi, Quagliariello, “Il comunismo in Italia e in France.
Per una nuova storia comparata,” in Aga-Rossi, Quagliariello, L’altra faccia
della luna, pp. 9–28; Saarelä, “International and National in the Communist
3 This is the general approach in, for example: Tiersky, Ordinary Stalinism.
4 For an example of “internal criticism” see Spriano, Storia del Partito comunista
italiano. A more recent example in this tradition is Agosti, Palmino Togliatti.
6 In France, these included A. Kriegel and later P. Robrieux and F. Hincker. In
Italy S. Bertelli and A. Tasca.
7 Two well-known examples for France are Hincker, Le Parti communiste au car-
For Italy see Bertelli, Il gruppo.
8 The breakthrough work was Kriegel, Les communistes français. Essai d’ethno-
graphie politique. For a brief discussion and evaluation of the anthropological
99–114. Recent interpretations of the anthropological approach, in particular
with regard to the parallels between communist ideology and religion, are
Lazar, “Communisme et religion,” and Courtois, “De la contre-société à la
contre-église.”
9 Especially to be noted here are the works of D. Blackmer, S. Tarrow, G. R. Ur-
21–24. On the basis of the same model, Kriegel has found that, for the PCF,
maintaining links with the communist world had priority over the other two
interests. Kriegel, “French Communism and the Fifth Republic.”
11 This is the case, for example, in Boggs, Plotke, The Politics of Eurocommunism.
12 For example, in Lange, Vannicelli, The Communist Parties of Italy, France, Spain.
13 The positive effects of détente on West European communism have been emphasised, for example, in Blackmer, “Continuity and Change,” esp. pp. 59–60; Kriegel, “The International Role of the French Communist Party since World War II,” esp. p. 46; and the various contributions in Tokes, *Eurocommunism and Détente*.

14 See, for example, Aga-Rossi, Zaslavsky, *Togliatti e Stalin*.

15 This issue has provoked heated discussions particularly following the publication of Courtois, Berth, Panne, *Le livre noir du communisme*. Various contributions on this topic have been published in “Dossier Communisme, Totalitarisme, Democratie,” *Communisme*, 1998, nrs. 53–54. See also the brief discussion of the limited utility of the concept of totalitarianism applied to Italian communism in Lazar, “A proposito del totalitarismo.”

16 Courtois, Lazar, *Le Communisme*, introduction. De Felice made an important contribution by introducing the concept of “sources of legitimation” and “double loyalty.” See, especially, De Felice, “Doppia lealtà e doppio stato.” For more on this see later in this chapter.

17 See, for example, Pons, *L’impossibile egemonia*.

18 For some important exceptions from the recent literature in Italy see Pons, “L’URSS e il PCI nel sistema della guerra fredda”; Gualtieri, “Il PCI, la DC e il ‘vincolo estero’: una proposta di periodizzazione.”

19 See for example: Suri, *Power and protest*.


26 To complete the overview of the literature, a few memoirs and autobiographical accounts should be mentioned here, for their information on specific aspects of the crisis: Pajetta, *Le crisi che ho vissuto*; Galluzzi, *La svolta*. Furthermore, two biographies of E. Berlinguer provide useful information and insights: Rubbi, *Il mondo di Berlinguer*; Fiori, *Vita di Enrico Berlinguer*.

27 Recently, for example, Lazar, *Le communisme*, pp. 40.

28 Bartošek, *Les aveux des archives*. The archive findings are reported in an impressionistic rather than systematic way.

29 Grémion, *Paris-Prague*.

30 Furthermore, a study exists on the immediate responses by the press of the French Left to the invasions of Hungary and Czechoslovakia: Deli, *De Budapest à Prague*.


32 Vigreux, *Waldeck Rochet*, chapter 9; Streiff, *Jean Kanapa*.

33 These different forms are most often studied separately. For an attempt to overview and periodise the doctrine of (proletarian) internationalism and its usage, particularly from the trade union perspective, see Vander Linden, “‘Proletarian Internationalism’: A Long View and Some Speculations.” See also


35 Throughout this work the term “orthodox” will not be used in an analytical sense but to refer to the standard of orthodoxy as defined by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The term “doctrine” will be used when referring specifically to Marxism-Leninism as followed by the West European communist parties, or parts of this doctrine. Ideology, by contrast, will be used in a more general sense, and linked to belief and identity.

36 While Fejtő has called these the three “myths” of communism, Tiersky has interchangeably used the concepts of dogma, doctrine and myth. Tiersky, *Ordinary Stalinism,* pp. 11–16 and 54–57. Fejtő, *L’héritage de Lénine,* pp. 95ff.


39 Among the many works on the crucial post-war years, see, for the Italian case, in addition to the works mentioned above, Gualtieri, *Togliatti e la politica estera italiana.* On the PCF see, for example, Buton, *Les lendemains qui déchantent*; Becker, *Le Parti communiste veut-il prendre le pouvoir?*; Kriegel, *Ce que j’ai cru comprendre.*

40 For a detailed discussion of the Comintern and Cominform see Fejtő, *L’héritage de Lénine.*

41 When using “communist world” I refer, in a general way, to both the bloc and the movement aspects. Kriegel identifies the overall “system” as including the “movement” and the “bloc.” Kriegel, *Le système communiste mondial.* L. Marcou argues in favour of the term “movement,” also when referring to the system of socialist states and the military aspects. Marcou, *Les pieds d’argile,* esp. pp. 11–18.

42 This approach to conceptual history is developed, for example, in Koselleck, *The Practice of Conceptual History.*


44 In the concept developed by S. N. Eisenstadt, collective identities are constructed through the following elements: a shared self-understanding and the creation of traditions; a myth system, the political order being secondary to the transcendental order; the vision of a common destiny and sense; the incorporation of protest and criticism. Eisenstadt, “Die Konstruktion Nationaler Identitäten in vergleichender Perspektive,” pp. 21–38.

45 This is also noted in Pons, “Comunismo, anti-fascismo e doppia lealtà,” p. 283.

46 The terms “socialist states” and “socialist regimes” will be used here to refer to
the regimes of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union; this is for reasons of convenience rather than as a value statement.

47 For a similar emphasis on the importance of the historical necessity of communism, see Legvold, “The Soviet Union and West European communism,” p. 347.

48 Fejtő, *L'héritage de Lénine*, pp. 95–112. Tiersky and others have sought in the principle of party development a privileged factor to explain the changes in communist parties, rather than internationalism or domestic strategy. An example for the PCI case is Cafagna, *C'era una volta*, esp. chapter 5.

49 This three-dimension concept of internationalism is similar to one developed by G. Lavau: Lavau, “L’URSS et eux,” pp. 189–201. Lavau has distinguished three dimensions in his analysis of the PCF’s relation to the Soviet Union in the 1960s and 1970s: judgement of its domestic regime, judgement of its global policy, and judgement of its history, particularly Stalinism.

50 For more detail on these three theories on the special role of the Soviet Union see Marcou, “La problématique d’un rapport difficile: URSS/monde communiste.”

51 For example in De Felice, “Doppia lealtà e doppio stato,” p. 516.

52 A methodological introduction to this type of comparison can be found, for example, in Hau, Kocka, “Historischer Vergleich: Methoden, Aufgaben, Probleme. Eine Einleitung,” in Hau, Kocka, *Geschichte und Vergleich*. pp. 9–45.

53 The Italian literature has generally granted less attention to the PCF than vice versa. A rare example is Aga-Rossi, Quagliariello, *L’altra faccia della luna*; dealing with communist-socialist relations: Bartolini, “Per un analisi dei rapporti tra partiti socialisti e comunisti in Italia e Francia,” pp. 439–480. As to comparative research in the Anglo-Saxon literature, especially the volume edited by Blackmer and Tarrow, *Communism in Italy and France*, should be noted.

54 For more information on adherence figures and votes, see the appendices.

55 For a critical discussion of this understanding common to much of the literature, see also Lazar, *Maisons rouges*, pp. 17–22.


59 For a similar argument on the comparison of the PCI and PCF conceptions of revolution see Lazar, *Maisons rouges*, pp. 262–268.


63 As noted by Lazar, in as far as it referred to the memory of France in the Second World War it was also connected to, and to some extent absorbed into, the general workerist culture of the party (ouvriérisme). Lazar, *Maisons rouges*, pp. 271–272.


65 A similar point can be found in Bernstein, “IVe République: confrontations et divergences,” pp. 79–96.

66 This is also noted in Lazar, *Le communisme*, p. 27.

67 De Felice, “Doppia lealtà e doppio stato.” While De Felice might be criticized for invoking “double loyalty” in an attempt to justify the dependence of the PCI on the communist world, the argument that international and ideological loyalties were, in Cold War Italy, a general phenomenon rather than one specific to the PCI, remains valid, especially in comparison with France.


69 There is disagreement in the literature on the analytical value of the term anti-Americanism. While some use it in a non-problematic but implicitly condemnatory way (for example Hollander, *Anti-Americanism*), others refuse to use it. I use it here in the context of Western Europe during the Cold War to refer to the opposition against the political, economic, and cultural relation of power that existed between the USA and Western Europe. For France, see the various contributions in Lacorne, Rupnik, Toinet, *The Rise and Fall of Anti-Americanism*. For Italy, see, for example (though referring rather to the socioeconomic model than to foreign policy), Nacci, “Contro la civiltà dell’abbondanza,” pp. 239–261.

70 In 1948, M. Thorez, then general secretary of the PCF, declared France to be an occupied country. Winock, “The Cold War,” pp. 67–78.

71 This is argued in Granjon, “Sartre, Beauvoir, Aron,” p. 123.

72 A similar point can be found in Pons, “La formazione della politica internazionale di Berlinguer: Europa, Nato e URSS (1968–1976),” unpublished paper (quoted with kind permission of the author).

73 Recent archival studies have emphasized the state of disarray in which the communist bloc and Soviet hegemony found itself during the 1960s. See, for example, Ouimet, *The Rise and Fall*, pp. 60–69. This was earlier emphasized in Rupnik, *L’autre Europe*, pp. 307–320.

74 It has often been noted that, while the undermining of domestic resistance in Hungary in 1956 took a few weeks, in Czechoslovakia it took one year, and in Poland, after the imposition of martial law in 1980, it was never destroyed. See, for example, Rupnik, *L’autre Europe*, pp. 313–320.

75 On the national roots of communism and the development of this in the 1950s and 1960s, see Gordon Skilling, *Czechoslovakia’s Interrupted Revolution*, chapters 1 and 2.


77 Different concepts have been proposed in this respect. Already in the 1960s, R. Loewenthal spoke of the “withering away” of communist ideology (Loewenthal,
World Communism). Marcou has spoken of the “secularization” of communism and the dimming of its messianism (Marcou, Les pieds d’argile, p.17).

78 For a similar view see Reiman, “La rivoluzione d’ottobre.”


80 For example Roberts, The Soviet Union, pp. 68–70.

81 For a recent view on this, see, especially, Suri, Power and protest, chapters 1 and 6. Views on détente after 1968 as a strategy to deal with internal bloc disunity were earlier developed in Garthoff, Détente and Confrontation, pp. 57–73; Dobrynin, In Confidence, pp. 191–264; Dawisha, “The 1968 Invasion of Czechoslovakia;” p. 24. Détente is considered to be “deflected” by the Czechoslovak crisis in Roberts, The Soviet Union, pp. 68–73.

82 The argument on détente as a strategy to deal with domestic dissent, in the East as well as in the West, has been emphasised in Suri, Power and Protest, passim.

83 Garthoff, Détente and confrontation, pp. 72–73; Suri, Power and Protest, pp. 213–216.

84 The PCI’s share of the vote in parliamentary elections grew between 1968 and 1976 from 26.9% to 34.4%; and that of the PCF between 1968 and 1973 from 20.0% to 21.3%. Also, some of the smaller CP’s went through a phase of relative expansion: the Swedish VPK grew from 3.0% to 5.3% between 1968 and 1973, and the Dutch CPN from 3.6% to 4.5% between 1967 and 1972.

85 This is implicitly acknowledged, for example, in Sassoon, 100 years of socialism, pp. 461–468.

86 For a useful, though not very recent, bibliography of Eurocommunism, see Nar- kiewicz, Eurocommunism 1968–1986.

87 The Eurocommunist leaders themselves in the 1970s referred back to the Czechoslovak crisis as a milestone, for example Azcarate, “What is Eurocommunism?” Protagonists and observers of the Prague Spring also made this connection, for example Mlynář, “The ‘Prague Spring’ and Eurocommunism.”

88 An exception from the 1960s onwards was the Dutch CPN.

89 The interpretation here draws on the different views on this among the socialist states, on which more in chapters 2 and 3. Critical and encompassing discussions of these “tasks” are largely lacking in the literature. The argument here is based partly on an interpretation by R. Legvold. Legvold, “The Soviet Union and West European communist,” pp. 315–329.

90 The most complete work so far on financial support by the Soviet Union to the communist parties of the world, based on research in the archives of the former CPSU, is Riva, Ora di Moscow. On the financial support to the PCF, see furthermore Montaldo, Les finances du Pcf.

91 Little is written on this aspect of the relations; an exception is the above-men- tioned Les Aveux des archives by Bartošek, which draws a picture of the commercial links between the PCF and the Czechoslovak CPCS.

92 More detail on the financial and material support to the West European CP’s follows in the chapters below.

93 On French society and economy in this period, see, for example, Cerny, “Modernisation and the Fifth Republic,” in Gaffney, France and Modernisation, pp. 9–43; furthermore Marwick, The Sixties, pp. 256–266.
For an overview of the responses by the West European communist parties to the transformation of the workforce, see Lazar, “Les partis communistes d’Europe occidentale,” pp. 30–45. See also the tables on the sociological implant of both parties, in terms of voters as well as adherents, in Lazar, Maisons rouges, pp. 395–401.

This analysis has been proposed by I. Wallerstein. Wallerstein, “1968: revolution in the world-system,” pp. 65–68.


Other important elements of this strategy of integration into the political system, which will not directly be dealt with in this study, were: holding executive power in local administrations, and expanding influence in media, academia, press and even the economy. On communists in power at the local level, see various contributions in Blackmer, Tarrow, Communism in Italy and France.

See the brief account of this in Romero, “Indivisibilità della guerra fredda.”


This is the periodization proposed by Garthoff, Détente and Confrontation, pp. 110–117.

Suri, Power and Protest, pp. 1–6.


Sarotte, Dealing with the Devil, esp. pp. 170–177.

Garton Ash, In Europe’s Name, pp. 57–59.