The volume *Globalizing East European Art Histories: Past and Present* assembles papers from the conference „East European Art seen from Global Perspectives: Past and Present”, which in 2015 gathered together in Lublin researchers working on a variety of topics with regard to the field of recent polemical scholarship dealing with global aspects of Art History. The volume reassesses the new or „extended“ methodologies of the already existing conception of „horizontal art history“, particularly in reference to Polish art historian Piotr Piotrowski’s call for the methodological practice of „provincializing the centers“. The contributors addressed and established the possible „methodological tools“ for a recent set of values such as internationalism, cosmopolitanism, cross-bordering, cross-regionalism, hybridization, globalization, transnationalism, transregionalism, etc. in diverse periods of East European Art History, advocating the thesis that Eastern European art scenes have always been entangled with actors and institutions in a wider world.

One could remark that the methodological approach in the volume entails two mutually related and overlapping conceptions. The first conception implies „connections and interactions“ – either direct or indirect, and actual or imaginary – between Eastern European art and artists; the second conception enforces a transnational approach which places the emphasis on the active process of transmission of ideas, concepts and discourses between multiple actors, many of whom were/are not European. As the latter model is the main prerequisite of the methodological approach in this volume, the editors admit that this general overall intention faced its own limitations and obstacles: „Although the declared goal may well be to construct a revisionist art history and disrupt the universalizing Western perspective, the actual interpretative or curatorial work nevertheless overwhelmingly falls back on the concepts and underlying assumptions of this same metanarrative.“ (p. 3) One of the reasons for this „failure“ might be found in the specific „regional property“ of Eastern European culture in relation to Western discourse, which Piotrowski calls „the close other“, an assumption of the other that is not „extremely“ strange to the Western metalanguage.

The 220 page volume includes an index of relevant terms and thirteen contributions structured around four parts: Part 1 – *Challenging the National Container: From the Transnational to the Planetary* – includes contributions that pose challenges to both „methodological nationalism“ and „the fieldwork approach“, which is essential for area studies in particular when analyzing artistic phenomena and knowledge production, by introducing the issues of networking, connections, and cross-fertilization as a main point of departure; Part 2 – *Hybridity: Identities and Forms* – comprises articles which predominantly thematize and discuss the issues of hybrid identities in artistic phenomena as a result of the globalization process in various historical points, actors and hubs. It accounts for the thesis that globalization is not a novel phenomenon, but a notion which ought to be historically and geographically thought; Part 3 – *Global Communities and the Traffic in Ideas* – focuses particularly on the exchange and circulation of ideas in the 60s and 70s artistic neo-avantgardes, as regards feminist discourse, critiques of everyday life, and decolonial practices within art discourse; while finally Part 4 – *Contemporary Art Praxis and the Production of Discourses* – directs attention to the dialectics of inclusion and exclusion, of integration and marginalization, of recognition and neglect, which are at work in the contemporary global art world and broader culture.

Unlike the naturalized knowledge of the East-European artistic discourse as a relatively closed system isolated from the flows of cultural goods and ideas – a situation caused particularly by Cold War knowledge constructions – the crucial aim of this volume is to demonstrate that Eastern European art scenes have always been entangled with actors and institutions in the wider world. In
terms of a methodological account this volume exemplifies is a transnational methodological approach to art history. The transnational approach to art history goes hand in hand with the „global turn“ in the humanities which seeks to examine and scrutinize „multiple modernities“, „entangled histories“, portals and spaces, „minor transnationalism“ and „the knowledges and cultural practices of colonial differences“ of different geographical regions.

It must be noted that the art historical humanist discipline has always addressed transnational phenomena connected with intercultural exchanges as a main prerequisite for the formation of the categories of style, topic, genre, and epoch, which however presumably pre-determined the ideas of cultural hierarchy. But this was because normative comparisons have always been rooted either in the presupposition of clear distinctions between supposedly fixed spatial entities (national, geographical, ethnographical etc.), or in the, so to speak, integrative approach of the (Western European) art historical nomenclature. The central question is therefore whether one may apply the normative categorizations of universal art historical discourse on cultural practices that do not follow – or cannot be judged by – the criteria of already normativized universal knowledge-legitimation. Therefore, the transnational approach implies „border thinking“, thereby producing disruptions within knowledge-power relations.

This is the ambition this volume more or less seeks to produce and show through the lens of the East-European „spatial difference“. The book presents some strong challenges for further work on the global, world and transnational aspects of art historical discourse. It would have been even more comprehensive had it included a more extensive account of 1. the „ontological“ issues of connectivity in the border-crossing conditions of transnational history; 2. critical reflection on the „mobility imperative“, since there are many actors with lack of means and resources (finances, knowledge, communication facilities etc.), as regards movement, travel and/or establishment of connections; 3. globalization’s „optimism“ in respect to power rela-

Nevertheless, Globalizing East European Art Histories: Past and Present is both theoretically very stimulating and, with its case studies, opens and develops new research optics in terms of the ongoing transnationalism research agenda in art history and cultural studies.