

plight of struggling large families, especially those living in the poverty-stricken rural countryside. The League was taken over by the fascist regime in July 1941, which forced upon it its own handpicked and pro-government leadership. The League's newspaper, originally called *Mnogodetnik* ('Multi-Child Parent'), advocated an unprecedented level of state activism in family welfare. *Mnogodetnik's* 1 March 1940 issue, for instance, called for introducing a social-welfare system of national income redistribution which would combat widespread poverty by granting child allowances and other benefits to needy large families, ostensibly because 'It was the state's responsibility to break with liberal market principles and to adopt a social role which would turn it into the arbiter among the classes in the name of their common interest. It was only via the imposition of social justice that the state could secure the protection of society and of itself.' (pp. 187–188) The League lobbied the authorities hard—and very successfully—to grant large families social benefits and allowances, including land distribution and redistribution grants for personal use under an amendment to the Act on Labour Land Funds passed by the National Assembly in May 1940. It is noteworthy that the 1943 Law for Large Bulgarian Families was left largely intact following the pro-Soviet coup of 9 September 1944, as the new communist authorities only stripped it of its ethnically discriminatory clauses while adding a new requirement mandating civil marriages for all Bulgarian citizens.

Finally, while the book aptly describes 'post-1990 Bulgaria as a pronatalist, family-and-child-friendly country' (p. 5), one should not lose sight of its retreat from the strongly pro-family and pro-child policies of the 'socialist era'. Gone are the days when Bulgarian mothers received generous financial assistance from the state, which included, among many other benefits such as the provision of free and universal health care, a substantial lump-sum

maternity premium for every newborn infant, a fully-paid three-year maternity leave for all working mothers (which counted towards retirement as full-time employment), and a monthly maternity stipend (equal to the average wage at the time) for all child-rearing women who were university-level students. This post-1990 retreat is best epitomised by the current Prime Minister's widely-reported outburst in 2010, when he angrily shouted down a young mother who was complaining to him in public that her family's meagre income was insufficient to feed her two children: 'You should have thought about that when you were conceiving them!'

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Pat Lyons: *Mass and Elite Attitudes during the Prague Spring Era: Importance and Legacy*

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The Prague Spring has entered historical consciousness as one of most decisive periods in the history of communism. It is now common wisdom that the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968 dashed all hopes for 'socialism with a human face' with the result that communism entered into the phase of Brezhnevite stagnation, its decline visibly symbolised by the sullen faces of Soviet gerontocrats and their sundry East European counterparts. The result was the abandonment of all socialist hopes among the intelligentsia and the gradual rise of anti-communist dissent throughout East-Central Europe. But were the intended messages of the Prague Spring and the unintended consequences of its forcible suppression indeed that transparent?

Impressive historical accounts and personal memoirs, from Gordon Skilling's

massive historical monograph on Czechoslovakia's 'interrupted revolution' to Zdeněk Mlynář's personal testimony have revealed much about the unfolding political process and motivations of key political actors. But what did Czech and Slovak elites and ordinary citizens *really think* about Dubček's great reform experiment while it was still unfolding? Pat Lyons has offered us the first study of mass and elite attitudes based on an impressive and painstaking reworking of public opinion surveys of the time. In the process of reconstructing and re-analysing the available data, Lyons has offered us, in addition to a revealing study of public opinion, both an informed history of social-scientific research in Czechoslovakia and a useful review of the most important reform proposals as well as sociological and historical arguments about the Prague Spring.

Lyons correctly notes that the very possibility of public opinion research was positively correlated with reformist party currents, as the very idea of 'public opinion' pluralism as a category of 'bourgeois thought' was anathema to the party conservatives. Thus it comes as no surprise that about two-thirds of all surveys in the 1967–1971 period (34 in total) were undertaken in 1968, followed by a precipitous decline in the period of 'normalisation', and a partial revival during the Gorbachev era (pp. 36–42). What do these surveys tell us about the state of Czech and Slovak public opinion on the eve of the Prague Spring, in the course of its development, and in its aftermath?

Lyons assesses Czech and Slovak public opinion on the eve of the Prague Spring on the basis of an international ten-country study undertaken in June 1967 (Chapter 3), which captured the beliefs of the younger cohort (ages 15–40), i.e. citizens who did not have personal experience of the first Czechoslovak democracy and, at the same time, were bound to become the most politically active age group during the Prague

Spring. Not surprisingly, the surveyed citizens of socialist states experienced a lower level of personal efficacy (political influence) than their Western counterparts. Even so, both Czechs and Slovaks were socially engaged (as measured by high rates of participation in social organisations), and exhibited optimistic expectations about the role of the younger generation in shaping a better future. The combination of a frustrating sense of political powerlessness, social engagement, and heightened expectations leads Lyons to the conclusion that there was 'latent popular support for reform' in the period immediately preceding the Prague Spring.

What kind of reform was envisaged and acceptable to most citizens? Here Lyons distinguishes between internal (intra-party) and external (intelligentsia and society-based) proposals for reform, demonstrating that the majority of Czech and Slovak citizens preferred a 'realistic' vision of reform along the lines advocated by Dubček (together with Ludvík Svoboda, the most trusted political figure of the time) with an enhanced political role given to organisations like the National Front. Even so, in the ideal case, the majority of citizens were in favour of a more competitive pluralist system, though nothing as radical as the 'market capitalism' of the early 1990s. Not surprisingly, members of the Czechoslovak Communist Party (KSČ) were considerably more conservative even as they, too, perceived the need for intra-systemic reforms (Chapter 2, pp. 77–110).

One of the most interesting parts of the book is the diachronic comparison of the attitudes of Czech and Slovak citizens in 1968 and 2008, when Lyons conducted a survey that replicated many of the questions of the original Mlynář team survey with the goal of gauging the continuities and discontinuities of political attitudes over time. Aware of the methodological difficulties involved, from the problematic reliability of the initial survey to the diffi-

culty of interpreting survey responses across such widely different political contexts (p. 146.), Lyons reformulated and reworded two thirds of the questions while reproducing the remaining third verbatim (pp. 162–163). One of Lyons' interesting findings is that there was no significant difference in Czech and Slovak public attitudes toward the reform process, belying the stereotypical image of 'liberal Czechs' confronting 'conservative Slovaks' (Dubček notwithstanding): in fact, both Czechs and Slovaks endorsed some form of 'socialist democracy', with their counterparts forty years later expressing strongly democratic preferences if with understandably different political preoccupations in mind. For Lyons, this raises the question of the historical sources of the continuity of democratic political attitudes over time—is it to be found in the experience of the Prague Spring itself or the earlier precedent of interwar Czechoslovak democracy?

Interestingly, while Lyons uncovers a strong continuity in the prevalence of democratic attitudes over time, which leads him to conclude that Czech and Slovak citizens did not have to learn democracy *ab ovo* in the post-communist period, the Prague Spring itself was not perceived to have been a major source of such attitudes. In fact, when asked to rate its importance relative to other events and/or periods from Czechoslovak history, the majority of Czech respondents (58%) did not perceive the 1989 Velvet Revolution to be a long-term consequence of processes begun during the Prague Spring, though this did not hold for older voters or Communist Party members, both of whom ascribed 1968 with greater historical import. Even so, it is striking that the First Czechoslovak Republic and even the epoch of Charles IV (1346–1378) was ranked higher in historical importance than the Prague Spring, the latter partially associated with negative feelings caused by defeat and Soviet occupation (pp. 254–259). Lyons supplements this analysis of mass

public opinion with an analysis of elite attitudes and a network analysis designed to gauge the level of elite cohesion during the Prague Spring. Contrary to the widespread perception of orthodox communists confronting liberal reformers, Lyons uncovers a much higher degree of consensus among the Prague Spring elite, notably around questions of its own social reproduction, gradualist reform, corporatist governance, and the value of political stability. Taken together, these data lead Lyons to challenge Skilling's canonical interpretation of the Prague Spring as an 'interrupted revolution', while acknowledging the validity of his contention that there was latent support for reform among both elites and citizens.

This cursory summary can hardly do justice to the wealth of Lyons' empirical study, which abounds with more interesting survey evidence than could possibly be presented here. Still, the big questions remain. Even if there is considerable evidence about elite consensus around issues of reform and the citizens' realism about the limits of change in the direction of desired political pluralism, survey evidence is of limited value in assessing the potential dynamic of an unfolding political process. Both earlier precedents (Hungary in 1956) and Gorbachev's subsequent experiment with perestroika and glasnost demonstrated how easily elite consensus can fall apart when 'society' enters the political process with full mobilising force. What is to say that a similar unravelling of the regime would not have occurred in Czechoslovakia if the political process was allowed to unfold uninterrupted, unless, that is, there was indeed something different about Czechoslovakia's conciliatory political culture? To be sure, there is no way to verify such counterfactual propositions, but Lyons' survey evidence demonstrating the strong preference of the majority for full freedom of expression and political pluralism renders plausible the view that a political showdown would have occurred

sooner or later. If that was indeed the case, the Soviet rulers may not have been unjustified in thinking that the Czechoslovak example could become the germ of political-ideological contagion throughout the Soviet bloc.

A few critical words are in order about the organisation of the study. Though the evidence is clearly and meticulously presented, the reader is often presented with such a wealth of methodological detail in almost each chapter that one wonders whether it would have been better to leave most of that to the already long appendices. In addition, new theoretical views are introduced in several chapters, with the result of distracting the reader's attention from the main point. The longitudinal comparison of public opinion (1968 and 2008) takes place in Chapters 4 and 7, with the two chapters on elites (5 and 6) thrown in between. Such organisational lapses and the occasional verbosity of style sometimes make reading this worthwhile study challenging and distract from its indisputable social-scientific merits. None of this, however, takes anything away from Lyons' empirical accomplishment, which throws a new light on a defining event of post-war communist history.

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Ronald Labonté, Ted Schrecker, Corinne Packer and Vivien Runnels (eds.):

Globalization and Health: Pathways, Evidence and Policy

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Health has long been one of the most desired outcomes of development. Recent studies confirm that investments in health and education have been important in explaining why some countries have experienced rapid economic growth, while others

have not. A healthy population is fundamental to a country's development. Moreover, poor health does more than damage the economic and political viability of any one country—it is a threat to the economic and political interests of all countries. Global health is an interesting research field that has been growing immensely during the last few years. It involves research in multiple disciplines as varying as medicine, epidemiology, sociology, demography, political science, psychology, evolutionary biology, and economics. From different disciplinary perspectives, it focuses on the determinants and distribution of health in international contexts. As borders between countries become less important, people and goods are increasingly free to move, which is creating new challenges in terms of global health. These challenges need to be dealt with not by national governments alone but also by international organisations and country agreements. Global health provides a new paradigm for research, education, and information on challenges faced by the world population.

Labonté and his co-editors contribute to bringing the research agenda for global health forward with their book *Globalization and Health: Pathways, Evidence and Policy*. The book stems from the work undertaken by the members of the Globalization Knowledge Network established as part of the WHO Commission on Social Determinants of Health. The authors and editors are all experts in their field and together they provide the reader with deep insights about how globalisation influences health. One main purpose of the book is to describe and examine how globalisation affects the social determinants for health. The book, consisting of thirteen monographic chapters, is the first of its kind and hopefully more will follow.

The authors start off by defining globalisation as a process whereby the cross-border exchange of goods, services, capital, technology, and labour serves to inte-