

BOOK REVIEWS/COMPTES RENDUS

Lenard J. Cohen and Jane P. Shapiro, editors, *Communist Systems in Comparative Perspective*, New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1974. \$4.95 (paper).

In this volume Lenard Cohen and Jane Shapiro offer a selection of readings designed to stimulate student interest in the comparative study of communist domestic politics. Specifically, the readings offer comparisons between the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China, and the Eastern European states in such broad topical areas as political socialization, political participation, and the role of the state bureaucracy. Zbigniew Brzezinski, in his preface to the work, states that a principal theme is to "focus the student's attention on the question of change within Communist systems." This theme causes the material selected to stress innovative or disruptive elements in modern communism rather than the factors which maintain the stability of communist regimes.

The twenty-four readings presented are excerpts from books and reprints from scholarly journals published from 1965 to 1971. The editors have created an admirable collection of stimulating articles that are consistently readable and free of jargon. There are wide variations, however, in the level of expertise assumed of the readers by the authors. For example, Dietrich Geyer's "The Bolshevik Insurrection in Petrograd" assumes a thorough prior knowledge of events during the October Revolution; R. V. Burks' contribution on the related topic of communist seizures of power in Eastern Europe can easily be followed by students with only general knowledge of post-war European history. Surprisingly, only Burks' articles and one of two reprints by Andrzej Korbonski, "Comparing Liberalization Processes in Eastern Europe," are directly applicable to comparative communism. The remaining twenty-two articles are case studies relating to specific political processes and institutions in individual countries. The comparative aspect of the collection is therefore provided primarily by the method of presentation of the material rather than by the content of individual selections.

The guiding concept of the presentation is that the simple juxtaposition of case studies on similar topics is sufficient to provoke comparative analysis and speculation on the part of the student. The book is organized accordingly. A concise, well-written introduction by the editors surveys the most influential system models used in comparative communism—totalitarian, interest group conflict, bureaucratic, etc.—and suggests some of the problems encountered in data collection. The remainder of *Communist Systems* is divided into eight sections on the basis of the political institution or process to be examined. Each section consists of a brief discussion of the importance of the institution or process to the study of communist domestic politics contributed by the editors and three readings, one each on the U.S.S.R., China, and Eastern Europe. Thus, the section devoted to political socialization contains readings on cinema distribution in the Soviet Union, the effect of Maoism on interpersonal relationships in the P.R.C., and social education in Bulgarian schools; the section on the Party includes articles on recent changes in the Chinese Party, post-Khrushchev developments in the CPSU, and the fall of Novotny in terms of intra-Party politics.

The execution of this format has created certain problems. Within some of the topic areas, i.e., that on socialization, the selections are too dissimilar in content to afford a comparison of the process under discussion. Further, half of the selections offered on Eastern Europe are devoted entirely or primarily to Czechoslovakia. Considering the diversity of the Eastern European political systems, it would have been more logical to select either eight comparative articles valid for the entire region or eight articles devoted to the Czechoslovak case study. Finally, the absence of material on the peripheral communist states—Cuba, North Korea, and Indochina—deprives the student of an introduction to an increasingly important subfield of comparative communist studies.

These criticisms notwithstanding, *Communist Systems in Comparative Perspective* remains an excellent supplementary textbook for courses in comparative communism. Its organization renders it adaptable to a variety of different course formats, and its emphasis on change complements primary texts emphasizing stabilizing factors and unchanging institutions. Its relatively low prices is a further advantage. With proper usage it will succeed in its objectives of stimulating student discussion and interest in comparative analysis of communist domestic politics.

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Charles Gati, editor, *The Politics of Modernization in Eastern Europe: Testing the Soviet Model*, New York: Praeger Publishers, 1974. xvii, 389 pp.

Drawn from a conference at Columbia in 1973, the chapters in this collection address the preconditions, processes, and impact of rapid socio-economic and political change in Eastern Europe. Their stated purpose is to assess the accuracy and helpfulness of modernization theory as a framework for studying East European politics. But "modernization" is conceived here so broadly that it inevitably applies to Eastern Europe. (The multiple meanings of the term are discussed by Vernon Aspaturian and Cyril Black in Part I, and by William Griffith in comments on Part IV.) Of more interest are differential experiences with modernization and impacts of Soviet influence among the various states. These are treated indirectly by case studies of individual countries, and by more general pieces on mutual influence within the bloc and on the balance between tradition and modernity.

The case studies are useful in documenting particular aspects of East European development: Charles Gati observes that revolutionary transformation was presaged in Hungary before Soviet intervention; Trond Gilberg outlines Romanian refinements on the strategy and practice of social mobilization; Otto Ulc discusses the stagnating effects of social mobilization in an already industrialized Czechoslovakia; and Lenard Cohen examines role institutionalization and differentiation among legislators and bureaucrats in Yugoslavia. The analysis, however, is fragmented. The authors have asked quite different questions for each country, obscuring the logic of the section as a whole. There is little to indicate whether each case is meant to be representative of Eastern Europe in general or whether each is particularly distinctive.

The section on mutual influences among bloc countries is focused more clearly: Zvi Gitelman examines East European influence on the Soviet Union; Roger Kanet discusses diffusion of policy innovations; and Vernon Aspaturian attempts to measure the relative impact of the Soviet Union on modernization in Eastern Europe by comparison with a "control" group of non-communist states at similar levels of development. Aspaturian's chapter is the most ambitious, and is prone to a criticism raised by the author himself in Chapter 1: communist definitions of modernization may be quite different from those in the West. Thus an attempt to compare rates of change and levels for particular indicators of modernization (e.g., literacy, infant mortality, medical facilities, personal amenities) among communist and non-communist countries appears tangential to Soviet and East European concerns with the *distribution* of benefits. Although they are recognized in passing, topics such as full employment, income distribution, social vs. personal consumption, and relative social mobility deserve more emphasis as indicators of modernity in socialist systems. Aspaturian's treatment of relative political development in Eastern Europe—by an analysis of changes in participation and party composition—is more effective.

The last section of the book presents overviews of tradition and change by György Ránki, Ivan Volgyes, and Barbara Jancar. Jancar addresses an especially interesting question, contending that modernization has altered the context and nature of dissent in communist states. She observes that changing demands of political constituencies, and the need for rational and predictable organization of public affairs have fostered largely institutionalized patterns of dissident behavior.

As this overview suggests, the scope of the collection is too broad to permit in-depth study of particular topics. The individual chapters, however, are generally well written. They serve less to test modernization theory than to offer case studies and comparative assessments to refine it.

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Charlotte Waterlow, *Superpowers and Victims: The Outlook for World Community*, Englewood-Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1974. viii, 181 pp.

It has become fashionable in international relations to speak of global interdependence, of the interdependent nature of ecological, economic, and political problems, and of the shortcomings inherent in "national" solutions to these problems. It has also become common to read about the particular difficulties faced by poor countries whose status provides them with a radically different perspective towards global questions than that of rich countries. The clash between modern and traditional cultures is of course also a recurrent theme in essays on comparative and developmental politics. However, Charlotte Waterlow's conclusion is not that there must occur an inevitable collision between these two cultures or between the rich and the poor, but that it is both necessary and possible to merge elements from each into a coherent *Gestalt* that would permit the growth of a world community able to cope with its burgeoning problems.