

POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION IN EASTERN EUROPE: A COMPARATIVE FRAMEWORK. Edited by *Ivan Volgyes*. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1975. xvi, 201 pp. \$16.50.

This book, originating as a panel at the 1972 meeting of the American Political Science Association, promises more than it delivers. Although the editor's intention is to "develop a model of political socialization applicable to the East European Communist states," no such "model" is developed. Instead, a few of the most basic concepts of Western political socialization literature are somewhat mechanically applied to East European societies. We are presented with generally sound and informative descriptions of the "formal and informal" structures, or agencies, of socialization in five East European states. The editor has provided a consistent framework within which data from individual countries are treated, as well as an overall "conceptual framework," which is really a survey of the roles and nature of socialization agencies in socialist countries, including some assessments of their effectiveness.

Volgyes is, perhaps, too ready to assume a widespread negative attitude toward the socialist system, and he does not differentiate between those aspects that may be attractive—such as welfare services or educational opportunities—and those that are not. "How can a citizen of these states believe, for example, in the 'glowing successes of building socialism' at the same time as when [sic] he compares his lot to that of the citizenry of the West European capitalist states?" This is a valid point, but nevertheless, it is an oversimplification. The East European citizen can also compare his own situation of ten, twenty, or thirty years ago, and the present system may not suffer by this comparison. Furthermore, one wonders if, in recent years, West European society has not lost some of its glitter in Eastern Europe, as problems of inflation, social unrest, and unemployment loom large.

This raises the central problem of the book. It is simply not possible to treat political socialization in Eastern Europe in the same way as one studies it in the West, because the basic data on attitudes are not available, and one cannot measure the relative effectiveness of different socialization agencies. Several of the authors make this very point. As Hanhardt puts it, "the basic problem in discussing political socialization . . . lies in determining just how much of the 'ought' really 'is.'" Volgyes, Otto Ulc, Arthur Hanhardt, and Trond Gilberg make commendable efforts to tease out the "ought-is" relationship from the data available, and their essays are generally persuasive. Joseph Fiszman's essay on Poland is full of convincing insights, but fails to exploit the relatively plentiful Polish empirical studies which might have supported his contentions.

For the most part, these essays represent serious and fruitful attempts to marshal the available evidence for analysis of political socialization in Eastern Europe. Unfortunately, few conceptual insights are offered, no new techniques for studying socialization in Eastern Europe are suggested, and the available data have not been exploited fully in all cases. Still, this is a useful beginning.

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