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IS THE MORAVIAN MOVEMENT THE LAST STRAW WHICH THE MORAVIANS GRASP?

The traditional idea of Moravian¹ autonomy within Czechoslovakia has found a new political expression after November 1989. It has been articulated mainly by a political movement called *The Movement for Self-Governed Democracy — Society for Moravia and Silesia*² (HSD-SMS)³. Their programme of Moravian self-government, their support for democratic principles of decentralization of the state administration and the acceptance of principles of economic reform has won relatively strong support by the Moravian public — especially in regions of Southern Moravia with the city of Brno as the centre of the movement. In the June 1990 Czechoslovak parliament elections, HSD-SMS got 8% of votes for the Chamber of People and 9% for the Chamber of Nationalities in the Czech Republic. However, in Southern Moravia HSD-SMS received 25% and 26% and in Northern Moravia 15% and 21% respectively. In Brno the corresponding figure was 31%. HSD-SMS thus won parliamentary seats and the Moravian phenomenon has been definitively reborn as an institutionalized part of Czechoslovak political scene.

¹ Moravia is a historically important region geographically situated in central part of Czechoslovakia, i. e. between Bohemia and Slovakia. Throughout history, she has always had a certain degree of autonomy. In modern times, when Czechoslovakia came into existence in 1918, Moravia received the status of the Moravian Land. In 1928 it started to be called The Moravian and Silesian Land. After the Communists take-over in 1948, an administration reform was introduced, and in 1949 Moravia vanished as an autonomous land. It was divided into two administrative regions, Southern Moravia and Northern Moravia. According to the last census (March 1991), there was a population of 4,010,375, in Moravia (28% of the population of Czechoslovakia and 39% of the population of the Czech republic). 13% of the population of the Czech republic declared themselves as of Moravian nationality. In Southern Moravia the corresponding figure was 49% and in Northern Moravia 15%.

² Silesia is situated in the north of Moravia. It borders with Poland.

³ The official acronym, HSD-SMS, stands for *Hnutí za samosprávnou demokratickou společnost pro Moravu a Slezsko*. This acronym (HSD-SMS) will be used throughout this paper.

It seems, however, that from then on the movement has been losing support gradually. According to results of our survey carried out in November 1990, *HSD-SMS* would won 29% of votes in Brno (see Mareš, Musil, Rabušić, 1992). In November 1991, according to our another survey's results, *HSD-SMS* would receive 19% of votes⁴. There are different causes of such development. It is very likely that difference of political opinions among the political representatives of the movement resulting in its breakdown into two separate factions *HSD-SMS I* and *HSD-SMS II* has played a very important role. Also, a strong attack of a part of Slovak political elite on the structure of Czechoslovak federal system which has threatened the very existence of Czechoslovakia has put the importance of Moravian demands aside. Last but not least, gradual crystallization of political opinion among the Czech public leading to distinct party identification should be also taken into consideration⁵.

The aim of paper is not to analyze the political existence *HSD-SMS*. Our question (asked here) is how to classify the phenomenon of Moravianism in the context of social change in Czechoslovakia. Is it an expression of nationalism in Giddens' sense, i. e. a set of symbols and beliefs providing the sense of being part of a single political community and feelings of identity with a distinct sovereign community (Giddens, 1989)? Is it a local nationalism as an expression of opposition against a greater whole which is, for various reasons, perceived as an oppressor? Is it in fact an utterance of hidden economic interests? Or is it perhaps the search for specific identity of a certain smaller community in the sense of Naisbitt's and Aburdene's (1990) "megatrends", i. e., of emerging uniformity and homogeneity of global culture?

We shall try to find our answer by means of analysis of our survey data about supporters and opponents of Moravian movement and voters of *HSD-SMS*. The data were gathered in two consecutive social surveys carried out on representative samples of the Brno population in November 1990 (N = 1024) and November 1991 (N + 1023). The focus of our attention will be the search for social sources of popularity for the idea of the Moravian autonomy as the core of the Moravian phenomenon. We believe that the question can be answered by finding political, ideological and value structures of people more or less identified with this idea.

⁴ Seen from the Southern and Northern Moravian perspectives the decrease is not so clear. According to Brno Institute for Public Opinion Polls, *HSD-SMS* would get 15% of „straw elections“ votes in Southern Moravia and 7 % of Northern Moravia in December 1991, while in January 1992 the corresponding figures were 14% and 2% respectively.

⁵ Political scientists generally agree that the 1990 Czechoslovak elections were more of the referendum-against-Communism-type than the true elections known from established democracies. The fact is that the crystallization of public opinion is rather relative since in Brno. For instance, 45% of respondents of our representative sample were not decided in November 1991 which political party they would elect.

SUPPORTERS AND OPPONENTS OF MORAVIAN MOVEMENT

People who according to their questionnaire answers supported to a various extent the idea of Moravian autonomy or who would vote for HSD-SMS in the elections can be divided for analytical purposes into four categories:

1. Those who do not support or sympathize with the movement or even oppose it (*the opponents*).
2. Those, who by their answers in the survey interviews manifest sympathies with the Moravian movement (*the friends*).
3. Decisive supporters of the movement (*the supporters*).
4. Those who would vote for HSD-SMS in the election (*the electors*).

These groups differ in their attitudes toward various Czech political parties and toward the economic reform. In addition, for instance, *the sympathizers* or *supporters* do not vote necessarily for HSD-SMS.

Despite the decreasing percentages of voters for HSD-SMS, people in Brno have kept sympathizing with idea of Moravian self-government. Altogether, in 1990 the idea gained sympathies and support of 90% and in 1991 77% of Brno population, i. e. of those classified in the second and third categories. We shall call them "*the sympathizers*" from now on. Surprisingly, this population is, in spite of its agreement concerning the dimension of Moravianism, politically and ideologically quite heterogeneous.

Respondents who expressed their dislike with the idea (i. e. *the opponents*) differ from *the supporters* and *the friends* in clear-cut endorsement of liberal values. Both in 1990 and 1991, the *opponents* preferred institution of private property, legitimation of income inequality (based on principle that those who perform better should be paid better), and they also preferred individual responsibility for one's own affairs more often than *the sympathizers*. They were also more frequently satisfied with the whole situation in Czechoslovakia. In 1990, they would vote mainly for the Civic Forum, and in 1991 for the neo-liberal Civic Democratic Party (which was established after the split of the Civic Forum in 1991).

The key indicator discriminating between "the supporters", "the friends" and "the opponents" is the attitude toward state paternalism versus individual responsibility. The difference grew markedly bigger in 1991, as illustrated by table 1.

It was also evident that *the supporters* were less liberal and more paternalistic in 1991 than in 1990 while liberal attitudes of *the opponents* were more pronounced.

Now we can draw a preliminary conclusion: the phenomenon of Moravianism found its broad social support among various groups of the Brno population with different political and ideological views. Their attraction to the idea of autonomous Moravia interpenetrated their political, ideological and social preferences, thus creating rather a heterogeneous social category. Hence, (in our understanding) this inclination might be partly irrational, attributed to the traditional local patriotism of the

Table 1 The rate of liberalism or paternalism in terms of respondents' attitude toward the state or individual responsibility for one's own affairs by their relation to Moravian movement in 1990 and 1991 (row percentages).

| relation to Moravian movement | state or individual responsibility? | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | liber att. | | mixed | | paternal. att. | |
| | 1990 | 1991 | 1990 | 1991 | 1990 | 1991 |
| <i>supporters</i> | 37 ⁰ / ₀ | 28 ⁰ / ₀ | 44 ⁰ / ₀ | 47 ⁰ / ₀ | 19 ⁰ / ₀ | 26 ⁰ / ₀ |
| <i>friends</i> | 34 ⁰ / ₀ | 36 ⁰ / ₀ | 50 ⁰ / ₀ | 47 ⁰ / ₀ | 16 ⁰ / ₀ | 18 ⁰ / ₀ |
| <i>opponents</i> | 43 ⁰ / ₀ | 53 ⁰ / ₀ | 47 ⁰ / ₀ | 39 ⁰ / ₀ | 10 ⁰ / ₀ | 9 ⁰ / ₀ |

Source: Fears and Hopes of Brno public II a III (data set)

substantial part of the Moravian people. In the Brno proper, one should also add Brno's slight resistance against Prague and her political, social and cultural power.

The idea of Moravian autonomy was opposed mainly by the (neo)liberal electorate who had expressed their preference mainly for the Civic Democratic Party of Václav Klaus. It seems that they were the people who had associated their hopes of fulfilling their interests mainly with creation of unified (and free) market space in Czechoslovakia. For them, the Moravian movement might have seemed either as an obstacle to that goal or they could regard it as irrelevant.

The analysis of respondents who maintained that they supported the movement naturally showed that their attitude is more clear-cut than that of those who had been just *the friends* of the movement. "The supporters" might have had specific reasons for joining the movement. We found out that in various indicators they had been generally more paternalistic than *the opponents* and that there had been a connection between various indications of their paternalism and their strong support for the Moravian movement. It seems even plausible to say that *the supporters* saw autonomous Moravia as their hope for a new guaranty of their social security which has been shaken strongly after the 1989 "velvet revolution". This conclusion can be supplemented by the evident lack of interest in the movement found among the liberally oriented population. The coincidence of paternalism and the Moravian movement on the one hand and of liberalism and the reservedness toward the movement was one of the most interesting results of the analysis. Such tendency was even stronger in 1991 than in 1990.

From the point of view of the very existence of any political party or political movement, sympathizers and supporters are very important. Nevertheless, those who really cast their votes for the particular party are of crucial importance. Our survey data revealed an overall decrease of 10⁰/₀ in the potential constituency of HSD-SMS between November 1990 and November 1991. Even greater decrease (18⁰/₀) was found among *the sympathizers* who had shifted their party identification from HSD-SMS to left-wing parties and, above all, parties of the centre. The Brno con-

stituency sympathizing with the Moravian movement thus became more diversified in terms of party preferences (see table 2).

Table 2 Voting parliamentary intentions of the sympathizers with the Moravian movement in Brno (November 1990 and November 1991).

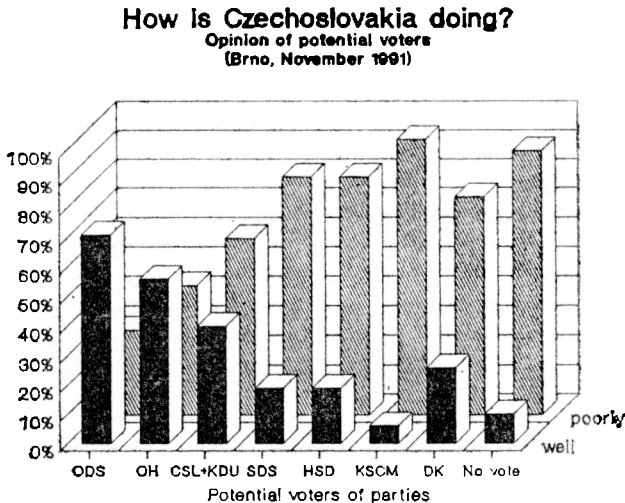
| | voting intentions | | | | | | | |
|--------------|-------------------|------|---------|------|---------|------|------------|------|
| | left-wing | | central | | HSD-SMS | | right-wing | |
| | 1990 | 1991 | 1990 | 1991 | 1990 | 1991 | 1990 | 1991 |
| sympathizers | 7% | 17% | 5% | 23% | 42% | 24% | 46% | 35% |

Source: Fears and Hopes of Brno public II & III (data set)

So far, political analysts have been locating HSD-SMS had been placed in the centre of the Czech political spectrum. However, our results of the 1990 survey indicate that voters of HSD-SMS had had some features similar to the voters of left-wing parties. This tendency became even more evident in 1991 (see figure 1 and figure 2).

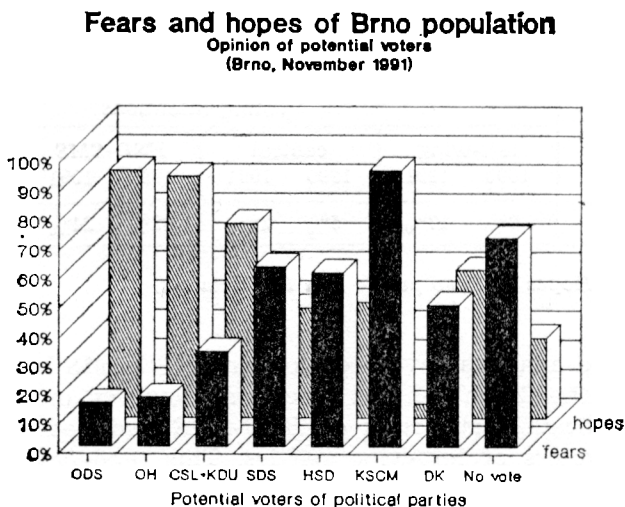
Those who answered that they would have elected HSD-SMS in 1991 differed in their opinions on the process of social and economic transition

Figure 1 "How is Czechoslovakia doing?" by opinion of potential voters of the political parties in Brno, November 1991.



- ODS The Civic Democratic Party
- OH The Civic Movement
- CSL + KDU The Christian Democrats
- SDS The Social Democratic Party
- HSD The Moravian Movement
- KSCM The Communist Party
- DK Don't know

Figure 2 Fears and hopes by potential voters of the political parties in Brno, November 1991.



| | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| ODS | The Civic Democratic Party |
| OH | The Civic Movement |
| CSL + KDU . . . | The Christian Democrats |
| SDS | The Social Democratic Party |
| HSD | The Moravian Movement |
| KSCM | The Communist Party |
| DK | Don't know |

significantly from wider HSD-SMS goals. Table 3 show quite clearly that voters of HSD-SMS belonged politically to the right of the parties of the centre in terms of their value preferences in 1990. However, in 1991 their position shifted to the left of the centre.

Generally speaking, about half a year before the parliamentary elections in Czechoslovakia (planned to take place in June 1992) we were witnessing rather a paradoxical situation: the wider political program of HSD-SMS which was in many features liberal and pro-reform attracted voters with more or less left-wing and paternalistic orientation. Such a paradox seemed to support again our empirical generalization about the general confusion of Czech voters (see Rabušić, Mareš, Musil 1991)⁶.

⁶ In our survey of November 1990, various indications showed that the liberal attitude toward institutional arrangement of the society had been much more frequent than paternalistic ones. However, we had many reasons to say that liberal orientation, so frequently preferred by our respondents, were not deeply anchored in people's hearts. We found out that consistent liberal preferences were expressed only by 33% of respondents — a marked difference compared to proportions got by means of measurement in separate scales. Consistent paternalistic orientation was maintained by only 4% of Brno residents. The rest of the sample (63%) fell into a broad category characterized by mixing of liberal and paternalist attitudes without any pattern. We labeled those respondents as mixed, puzzled and hesitating.

Table 3 Preference of types of political parties by indicators of liberal attitudes in November 1990 and November 1991 (row percentages).

| 1990 | types of political preference | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | left-w. | HSD-SMS | centre | right-w. |
| those preferring: | | | | |
| private property | 3 ⁰ / ₀ | 35 ⁰ / ₀ | 4 ⁰ / ₀ | 58 ⁰ / ₀ |
| individual responsibility | 7 ⁰ / ₀ | 33 ⁰ / ₀ | 6 ⁰ / ₀ | 54 ⁰ / ₀ |
| income inequality* | 6 ⁰ / ₀ | 35 ⁰ / ₀ | 4 ⁰ / ₀ | 55 ⁰ / ₀ |
| freedom to equality | 6 ⁰ / ₀ | 34 ⁰ / ₀ | 5 ⁰ / ₀ | 55 ⁰ / ₀ |
| 1991 | | | | |
| private property | 10 ⁰ / ₀ | 16 ⁰ / ₀ | 20 ⁰ / ₀ | 54 ⁰ / ₀ |
| individual responsibility | 5 ⁰ / ₀ | 10 ⁰ / ₀ | 21 ⁰ / ₀ | 64 ⁰ / ₀ |
| income inequality* | 12 ⁰ / ₀ | 16 ⁰ / ₀ | 20 ⁰ / ₀ | 52 ⁰ / ₀ |
| freedom to equality | 11 ⁰ / ₀ | 15 ⁰ / ₀ | 22 ⁰ / ₀ | 52 ⁰ / ₀ |

(* based on working performance)

Source: *Fears and Hopes of Brno public II a III (data set)*

We believe that causes of this should be partly found in the lack of political culture brought about by peculiar political socialization of the past forty years and in the influence of pervasive Communist ideology of state paternalism. Yet, there might be another explanation of this (seemingly) paradoxical combination of paternalist values and the identification with liberal movement: It can be explained in terms of social change bringing about paternalistic panic in Czechoslovakia.

SOCIAL CHANGE AND PATERNALISTIC PANIC

The Czech philosopher and sociologist Bělohradský (1991) says that post-Communist societies are characteristically panic-ridden because they have become unfathomable. Indoctrinated values of social homogenization and social certainties have been put to doubt and virtually treasured under the new conditions of social change. However, a substantial part of the population believes (or wants to believe) that the current chaotic state of public affairs is only a temporary phenomenon, some kind of prepayment for better future organization of the society, and, consequently, for its future affluency. The source of uncertainties among the population is lack of clarity concerning what is really better: the social security guaranteed by paternalist state or a vision of affluent future connected with the risk of individual failure?

Paternalist values have been to a great extent rendered doubtful and suppressed by the pathos of revolutionary events during the hectic days of the 1989 revolution. However, they remained hidden under the surface. Current economic changes and their social consequences are revitalizing them again. The resentment, based on the values of homogeneity and cer-

tainty, slows down the the social change, whose aim is the creation of civic society. Paradoxically, new expectations of paternalistically oriented initiatives of the state are stimulated. Such initiatives should, according to some citizens, soften the impact of the economic reform even at the cost of state intervention into the nascent market relationships. Creation of the civic society itself is being tied, above all, to the initiative of the state.

People reconciliate themselves to the practical consequences of institutional changes that they verbally demanded and supported only a short time ago. Liberalization of economic conditions which appears to be an automatic and legitimate aspect of social change runs against fixated paternalist values. People do not want to refuse the change but, at the same time, are not capable of accepting it fully. Chaos results in the symbiotic preference of liberal social order with a strong emphasis on the values of equality and social certainty.

We think that the continuation of the economic reform and the growing impact of its consequences could lead to the replacement of this chaotic worldview by feelings of destruction and collapse. Probably only a small part of the population perceives current developments as an exchange of disputable certainty for open chances. People who have accepted the philosophy of the paternalist state see the current situation more in terms of losses than as a replacement of one value by another that is perhaps equally meaningful or perhaps even more important.

If the public perceives the transformation from totality to democracy as attractive in political terms, transformation from paternalism to liberalism in economic terms is difficult for the population which has become used to the protective hand of the state⁷. Transfer from totality to democracy offers the option of taking responsibility for one's life into one's own hands. Institutional transformation from paternalism to liberalism changes this attractive possibility into an unpleasant everyday reality. Economic capacities of households are being diminished, and social structure is losing its homogeneity. However, the culturally fixated strategies for coping with problems of everyday life have not been changing. They have been — and still are — permeated by expectations of a facilitative intervention of the state. What to do, though, when the intervention does not take place or is even denied?

Inconsistencies between the changing conditions of life and the habitual backgrounds of the population cause an insufficient and even chaotic

⁷ The transition from totalitarianism to democracy is difficult in all Central and Eastern European countries due to an underdeveloped system of relevant institutions, social control, and both norms and values. Civic society as the basis for liberal attitudes does not yet exist. If there have been discussions about democratic traditions in Czechoslovakia now, they are rather resentment than reality. Despite the fact that Czechoslovakia was a real island of democracy among the totalitarian and authoritarian states of the them Central and Eastern Europe during 1930s, we have to realize that we are three generations away of that reality now. Also, liberal values, valid and existent in those days, got covered with almost half a century of state paternalism.

orientation in a new situation. Is not this very chaos one of the causes of new nationalistic movements recorded in many of the former communist countries? As Touraine (1991) says, the true adversary of the new social movements in the East is not so much the social actor, who is determined by his interests and his power, as the social actor, who is determined by his identification with the 'Whole'.

DOES A DROWNING MAN GRASP AT THE MORAVIAN STRAW?

A question arises: what can replace the lost identity? We suppose that the emotionally strong identification with the idea of national or regional autonomy which has been strongly voiced in Slovakia and partially also in Moravia, is, to a great extent, the product of search for identity with the "whole". Threatened values of security and social homogeneity have been replaced by values of national or regional togetherness and uniqueness. Paternalistically oriented citizens can hardly turn coats and promptly identify themselves with the individualism of liberal origin. However, they can easily find satisfaction of their need for identity in a collective experience of national or regional togetherness. Although we do not consider this as the only reason for the growth of nationalism in the post-Communist countries, it is certainly not an insubstantial reason.

We believe that the hypothesis of value vacuum, created by the threats to and doubts in the paternalist values of social homogeneity and security, is supported by the empirical data concerning identification with national or regional community as articulated by the "Moravian movement". In our view, this identification can be perceived as a specific variant of regional nationalism, and as we understand it, it has been partly brought about by frustrations of some part of population who lost (for the reasons mentioned above) their existential identity.

The decrease in the number of Brno citizens identified with *HSD-SMS* in 1991 was accompanied by crystallization of paternalistic value structures within the core of *HSD-SMS* voters. We have to ask a logical question: Why have those people supported and why would have they elected the movement, whose program is not paternalistic at all? Other data gathered by the Brno Institute for Public Opinion Polls and analyzed by Foret and Foretová (1991) suggest the answer. According to these authors, "even the most radical citizens of Moravia and Silesia (protesters who regularly gathered at city squares demonstrating their demands for Moravian autonomy) see the independence of Moravia as a solution for the improvement of their well-being" (Foret, Foretová, 1991:2). People interviewed at the demonstration which took place in Brno in April 1991 believed that Moravian autonomy would contribute to economic equality with the Czechs (40% of respondents) and that it would help Moravia to achieve independent economic prosperity (28%). According to another set of opinion poll data, the majority of Moravians (93%) thought that Bohemia had been economically preferred to Moravia during the last couple of decades (Foret, Foretová, 1991).

In the light of these findings it seems plausible that paternalistically oriented Moravian patriots who had lost a cushion of the state-guaranteed social securities have chosen a distinct political strategy: It is not worthy to support the state centralism because it does not guarantee social security any longer. Resources which, in the past, had been concentrated in central institutions for reallocation, should be kept in the region in which they had been produced. Only then they can be used as a viable economic base for a new social security of Moravians. Or, to put it in a less sophisticated way, the strategy could be voiced as follows: "We'll reallocate the money here, and in our own way".

The process of party identification is in some aspects irrational, even instinctive, and therefore difficult to grasp. We do not suggest that our explanation of paternalization of *HSD-SMS* voters and supporters is the only one possible. We believe, nevertheless, that the present form of Moravianism has awakened political sympathy due to the connection of widespread local patriotism and socio-economic fears in the period of general societal transition.

Our hypothesis that priorities of many people who identify themselves with the Moravian version of regional nationalism (with its centre in Brno) are not anchored so much in civic and political rights as in social rights in Marshall's sense (1973)⁸ (see Mareš, Musil, Rabušić 1991) has been further confirmed by our November 1991 survey data. It seems more and more plausible that the key causal factor of the regional nationalist movement in Moravia was primarily a social stress which has led to frustrations of the population deprived of certain social certainties on which the people used to build their life strategies.

It is possible that the need to compensate for this loss has contributed more to the popularity of the Moravian movement than the very consciousness of cultural difference, regional uniqueness and desire of greater regional autonomy. To put it differently, those who lost the support of the state to which they were used to for years have tried — in the troubled waters of contemporary social and economic developments — to grasp (as the proverbial drowning man) instinctively at the straw of Moravian nationalism which which they hope will substitute for them the disappearing security of the big father — the state.

⁸ T. H. Marshall (1973), as is generally known, distinguished three types of rights which had been evolving gradually with the growth of citizenship: civil rights, political rights and social rights. Civil rights refer to the rights of the individual to equal justice before the law. They involve the freedom of individuals to live where they choose, freedom of speech and religion, and the right to own property. Political rights include especially the right to participate in elections and to stand for public office. Social rights (which are historically the youngest) concern the prerogative of every individual to enjoy a certain minimum standard of economic welfare and security. They include such rights as sickness benefits, social security in case of unemployment, and the setting of minimum wage.

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