Socialism With a Human Face:
The Leadership and Legacy of the Prague Spring

Anna J. Stoneman
Stanford University Online High School, Madison, Wisconsin
Senior Division Historical Paper, National History Day 2015 Competition

They may crush the flowers, but they cannot stop the Spring.

- Alexander Dubček, 1968[1]

IN JANUARY OF 1968, Czechoslovakian leader Alexander Dubček introduced a program of unprecedented economic and political liberalization, intending to revitalize the nation. After two decades of harsh and oppressive Communist rule, the reforms ended the censorship of the media, press, and travel, and granted citizens the right to think, speak, and behave freely. Dubček's leadership gave rise to an explosion of artistic expression, free discussion, and alignment with democratic ideology known as the Prague Spring. Although forcibly suppressed by a Soviet-led invasion in August of 1968, the Prague Spring left as a legacy the renewal of active citizenship and democratic ideals, paving the way to the fall of Communism in Czechoslovakia in 1989.

Communist Occupation of Czechoslovakia

The citizens of Czechoslovakia endured a tumultuous history of decades of occupation. After declaring its independence in October 1918 in the aftermath of the First World War and the collapse of the Habsburg Empire, Czechoslovakia was initially a thriving, autonomous, constitutional democracy.[2] After just twenty years, however, with the signing of the Munich Agreement on September 29, 1938, the country was "sacrificed" to Nazi Germany.[3] Czechoslovakia was occupied by Nazi forces throughout the Second World War, suffering "repression…exploitation,

and extermination."[4] After the war, rather than having its constitutional democracy restored, a Soviet-endorsed Communist dictatorship was installed, and the citizens of Czechoslovakia fell behind the Iron Curtain (see Appendix I) and began to suffer under the most oppressive and rigid regime of any Soviet bloc country, which relied heavily on terror and all but eliminated civil rights.[5] Thick barbed wire, plowed earth, watchtowers, and sentries with shoot-to-kill orders enclosed the country's borders.[6] Political opponents to the dictatorship were purged and executed following show trials.[7] An "atmosphere of permanent fear" was established, as hidden government informants worked their way into the population to spy upon the citizens, who rapidly became reluctant to speak in public or to one another, not knowing who could be trusted.[8]

During this period, Czechoslovakia was led by the hardline KSČ (Communist Party of Czechoslovakia) Stalinist Antonín Novotný. The nation underwent major economic decline in the early 1960s, but policies remained stagnant.[9] Slovak politician Alexander Dubček was the greatest rival of Novotný, maintaining loyalty to the Soviet Union but favoring reformed socialism through democratization and economic reform.[10] In October of 1967, Dubček challenged Novotný before the Central Committee of the KSČ,[11] prompting Novotný to summon Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev to Prague in December, expecting him to support the status quo.[12] Upon his visit, however, Brezhnev stated, "This is your affair…I shall not deal with the problems that have arisen in your country."[13] On January 5, 1968, Brezhnev approved the Committee's appointment of Dubček to First Secretary of the KSČ.[14]

"Socialism With a Human Face"

The leadership of Dubček was evident in his immediate introduction of the groundbreaking Action Program to liberalize Czechoslovakian society. Commonly referred to as "socialism with a human face," the reforms were intended to "build an advanced socialist society on sound economic foundations…that corresponds to the historical democratic traditions of Czechoslovakia."[15] Externally, Dubček proposed opening relations with Western powers and other nations of the Soviet bloc, opened trade routes, allowed private enterprise, and proposed a ten-year transition to democratized socialism that would allow multiparty elections.[16] Arguably the most significant reform of the Action Program, however, was the reestablishment of personal liberties to the people of Czechoslovakia.[17] Dubček uprooted the totalitarian principles of the KSČ by granting greater freedoms of press, travel, and assembly, and greatly limiting the power of the secret police.[18] On June 26, 1968, Dubček provoked serious criticism

from the Soviet-allied leaders of other Soviet bloc governments by formally abolishing all forms of censorship.[19] No longer were the citizens oppressed in thought or in action.

Dubček's intent was to revitalize and re-popularize KSČ socialism by eliminating its most oppressive features, but his doing so gave rise to a brief, eight-month period of utter freedom, characterized by hitherto censored dissemination and discussion of information. Televisions began regularly broadcasting news programming and impromptu political meetings that "wound late into the night, and were watched excitedly by viewers."[20] A taxi driver at the time remarked that "nobody talks about football at my local [pub] any longer," – now they only talk about politics.[21] Tape recorders flew off the shelves, as citizens recorded radio news broadcasts while they watched television.[22] This sudden exposure to opinions and third-party information beyond Soviet propaganda emboldened the citizens to call out for increased democratic reforms.

The journal *Literární listy*, or "Literary Pages," was created by a group of playwrights, writers, and revolutionary thinkers wanting to spread their ideas to the public.[23] In it, merely one day after censorship of the press was officially eliminated, journalist Ludvík Vaculík published the "Two Thousand Words" manifesto. Vaculík famously addressed the common people of Czechoslovakia to urge them to implement Dubček's reforms and turn against any government not actively moving the nation toward democratization:

> At this moment of hope, albeit hope still under threat, we appeal to you. Several months went by before many of us believed it was safe to speak up; many of us still do not think it is safe. But speak up we did, exposing ourselves to the extent that we have no choice but to complete our plan to humanize the regime. If we do not, the old forces will exact cruel revenge. We appeal above all to those who have just been waiting to see what will happen. The time approaching will determine events for years to come.[24]

Through these newly opened media channels, citizens were able to directly communicate with previously censored political thinkers, providing the citizens a first non-propagandized look at Czechoslovakian and Soviet history.[25] Dubček's leadership in relaxing censorship thus facilitated the transition of political opinions and arguments from oppressed intellectuals to the general public and gave rise to the renaissance of expression of the Prague Spring – and to its revolutionary potential.[26]

Invasion and "Normalization"

In leading the Prague Spring reforms, Dubček believed that he had the tacit approval of the Soviet Union.[27] Recent changes made by the previous

Soviet leader, Nikita Krushchev, caused Brezhnev to be considered a transitional figure between past totalitarian regimes and new widespread tolerance.[28] Furthermore, the lack of direct Soviet involvement with internal affairs produced an illusion of sovereignty, heightened by Brezhnev's stated refusal to intervene when previously summoned to Prague.[29] However, the liberalization of Czechoslovakia during the Prague Spring was a threat to the unity of the Soviet bloc nations under strict Soviet hegemony, and therefore to the strength of the Soviet Union itself.[30] The Soviet response to the Prague Spring consisted of three distinct stages. First came a three-month period of reconnaissance and surveillance, which culminated in the summoning of Dubček to an official meeting in Dresden, Germany, on March 23, 1968, during which Dubček refused Soviet demands to repeal his Action Program.[31] Secondly, the Soviet Union increased political pressure on Dubček, and, when the Prague Spring continued to grow in power, met with other Soviet bloc nations in Warsaw, Poland on July 14, 1968, to authorize the "last resort" of intervention.[32] Finally, the Soviet Union called Dubček to a meeting in Bratislava on August 3, at which the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Poland, East Germany, and Hungary negotiated and ratified the Bratislava Declaration, which stated that the Soviet Union would intervene if a bourgeois system were established with multiple parties challenging the KSČ, but stressed that socialist Czechoslovakia could continue "on the basis of the principles of equality, respect for sovereignty, and national independence."[33] Dubček left Bratislava confident that Czechoslovakia had, at long last, achieved a degree of autonomy within the socialist system.[34] Western press considered the meeting a "Soviet retreat and a Czechoslovak achievement."[35]

The Bratislava Declaration, however, had only been a ruse on the part of the Soviets, to buy time.[36] During the night of August 20, 1968, less than two weeks after its signing, 200,000 Soviet and Warsaw Pact troops and 2,000 tanks were sent into Czechoslovakia to occupy the territory and brutally and efficiently suppress the Prague Spring movement. (See Appendix II.) The attack was unprovoked, unforeseen, and shocked the Czechoslovakian people. In a midnight radio message, Dubček urged "all citizens of the Republic to keep the peace and not resist the advancing armies, because the defense of our state borders is now impossible."[37] Citizens were awakened in the middle of the night by Dubček's message, phone calls, or the sound of tanks rolling in, and gathered together in tears to confirm that "the Russians have invaded our country."[38]

Powerless to fight off the invasion, the Czechoslovakian people resisted nonviolently. Students and workers alike attempted to stop soldiers in their tracks and reason with them. Massive demonstrations were held in Prague, railways and equipment were sabotaged, and street signs were altered to

confuse the invaders, but it made little difference.[39] The tanks and troops continued to roll in, and a week into the invasion, 186 citizens had been killed and 362 seriously wounded.[40] Dubček and four other KSČ officials were arrested in the night and transported to Moscow, where they were forced to approve the "temporary" military occupation and restoration of complete censorship.[41] The blissful eight months of the Prague Spring had come to a brutal halt.[42]

Immediately after the invasion, all reforms of the Prague Spring were repealed.[43] Gustáv Husák replaced Dubček as leader of Czechoslovakia, and anyone who had embraced or participated in the reform movement was purged from his or her job, such that "at least three-quarters of a million citizens lost their jobs or were demoted or seriously discriminated against."[44] Censorship of speech, press, travel, and the arts was re-imposed in full. Literary and artistic products of the Prague Spring were destroyed. Czechoslovakia was launched into a decades-long, stultifying period of "normalization."[45]

Disillusionment and Dissidence

The ashes of the suppressed Prague Spring left many legacies, however, which eventually brought about the ultimate democratization of Czechoslovakia in 1989. The most immediate legacy was the dissident movement. With the intellectuals no longer a part of the government, the movement no longer focused on reforming the government, but instead on overthrowing it entirely.[46] Writers and thinkers, including Václav Havel, convened in secret, but their words percolated into the public consciousness.[47] On January 16, 1969, a student by the name of Jan Palach set himself on fire in central Prague to protest the censorship of free speech.[48] Palach's self-sacrifice galvanized and provided a rallying cry for the dissidents: "They blamed the Soviets for Palach's death, the Czechoslovak political leadership for its betrayal, and themselves for their failure to bring permanent political change."[49] Havel and several other leading dissidents, including Ludvík Vaculík, the author of the "Two Thousand Words" manifesto, produced a second manifesto – the Charter 77 Declaration.[50] This document called the government to task for violations of rights guaranteed in treaties signed by the Communist government, including "freedom of public expression" and "freedom of religious confession."[51] The document received 243 signatures, but Havel and Vaculík were arrested and imprisoned and Charter 77 failed to achieve immediate success.[52] Nevertheless, the political opposition movement continued to coalesce underground.[53]

The second immediate legacy of the Prague Spring was widespread disillusionment with Communist ideals, which was the force that drove

the public to action. The Prague Spring was a foray into the reinvention of Communism, and, according to Mikhail Gorbachev,

> The defeat [of the Prague Spring] represented not just a new wave of repression against all attempts at democracy under 'actually existing socialism'…it also represented nothing less than the beginning of the end for the totalitarian system.[54]

Although Communist rule continued in Czechoslovakia after the invasion, the people now considered themselves independent from and opposed to the ruling government. The idea that Communism could be reformed was crushed under the tanks on August 21, 1968 and never recovered, as it became widely apparent that the actions of the current leadership were not for the good of the people, but that of the ruling party.[55] This disillusionment was made palpable in that those clamoring for reform were no longer just a core group of writers and dissidents, but rather the common citizens.

"The Power of the Powerless"

The ultimate legacy of the Prague Spring came in 1989, when its other primary legacies – dissidence and disillusionment – came together in the Velvet Revolution, which finally eliminated Communism from the nation.[56] In January 1989, dissidents staged a series of mass protests to mark the twentieth anniversary of Jan Palach's self-immolation.[57] The arrests of the leaders of these protests, including Havel, led to further protests that "went well beyond the circle of established dissidents to draw in a much larger group… who had not previously taken public action."[58] In Prague on November 17, a peaceful student-led march on Wenceslas Square was violently suppressed by riot police. Alexander Dubček returned from exile to lead the Slovakian group Public Against Violence, which united with the Czech Civic Forum, led by Václav Havel, to form a united front.[59] (See Appendix III.) The legacy of the Prague Spring featured prominently in the Proclamation on the Establishment of the Civic Forum, which demanded "that those members of the Presidium of the [KSČ] who are directly connected with the [invasion] in the year 1968" immediately step down.

The Velvet Revolution was the product of the unity of the people oppressed by two eras of Communism, evidenced by the cry, "We ask you people of '68 to join us students of '89."[60] The public continued with daily protests of ever-increasing magnitude and demonstrated, in Havel's words, "the Power of the Powerless."[61] The KSČ Socialist regime resigned weeks later in the face of these mass demonstrations of the people that it had oppressed, and the people of Czechoslovakia finally saw the restoration of their democratic republic, with multiparty elections after forty years of

Communist rule. The Prague Spring provided the disillusionment with the distorted ideals of Socialism that set into motion the movement toward democracy. Only when the disillusionment and the generations were united did freedom come to Czechoslovakia.

The eight months of freedom provided by the leadership of Dubček revealed to the citizens of Czechoslovakia not only that autonomy was universally desired, but also that it was attainable. The brief lifting of censorship and following military occupation demonstrated to all the true nature of the Soviet Union. The rise and subsequent suppression of freedom in the Prague Spring revealed for the first time the cracks in the armor of the Communist regime. "Socialism with a human face" demonstrated that the Soviet Communist system could only function when individual liberties were severely curtailed. Through the leadership of Alexander Dubček in his introduction of democratic reforms, the Prague Spring left as a legacy the renewal of democratic ideals and paved the way to the fall of Communism from Czechoslovakia in 1989. The Soviet Union crushed the flowers in 1968, but it did not stop the Spring.

Notes

1. Rombova, Lenka, and Dardis McNamee. "Prague Spring Remembered." Vienna Review. 1 May 1968.
2. Zeman, Z.A.B. *Prague Spring: An Eyewitness Report on Czechoslovakia Before the August Invasion*. 133.
3. David M. Kennedy, *Freedom From Fear: The American People in Depression and War*, 1929-1945. 418.
4. Judt, Tony. *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945*. 13-14.
5. Pehe, Jiři. "A Spring Awakening for Human Rights." New York Times. 14 August 2008.
6. Skoug Jr., Kenneth N. *Czechoslovakia's Lost Fight for Freedom 1967-1969: An American Embassy Perspective*. 3.
7. Mlynár, Zdeněk. *Nightfrost in Prague: The End of Humane Socialism.* 28.
8. Interview with Zuzana Vanišlova, Professor of Language. *The Power of the Powerless*. Dir. Cory Taylor.
9. Brown, Archie. *The Rise and Fall of Communism.* 103.
10. Bolton, Jonathan. "Worlds of Dissent: Charter 77, the Plastic People of the Universe, and Czech Culture Under Communism." 1 September 2012.
11. "Speeches by Alexander Dubček and Antonín Novotný at the CPCz CC Plenum." Reprinted in Navrátil. 13-15.

12. Navrátil. 7.
13. "Remarks by Leonid Brezhnev at a Meeting of Top CPCz Officials, in Prague, December 9, 1967." Reprinted in Navrátil. 18.
14. "Resolution of the CPCz CC Plenum, January 5, 1968, Electing Alexander Dubcek as First Secretary." Reprinted in Navrátil. 34-35.
15. "The CPCz CC Action Program, April 1968." Reprinted in Navrátil. 92-95.
16. Ibid.
17. *Popular Support of Dubček and the Action Program in Czechoslovakia*. Accessed through Pehe. 51.
18. "The CPCz CC Action Program, April 1968." 92-95.
19. Long, Michael. *Making History: Czech Voices of Dissent and the Revolution of 1989*. 2.
20. Bren. 24.
21. Zeman.19.
22. Bren. 26.
23. Bischof, Günter, Stefan Karner, and Peter Ruggenthaler. *The Prague Spring and the Warsaw Pact Invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968*. 63.
24. Vaculík, Ludvík. "Two Thousand Words That Belong to Workers, Farmers, Officials, Scientists, Artists, and Everybody." Repreinted in Navrátil. 177-181.
25. Bren. 24-25.
26. Long. 5-6.
27. Williams, Kieran. *The Prague Spring and its Aftermath: Czechoslovak Politics 1968-1970*. 10.
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid.
30. Batyuk, Vladimir. "The End of the Cold War: A Russian View." Web.
31. "Stenographic Account of the Dresden Meeting, March 23, 1968," and "Alexander Dubček's Presidium Report on the Dresden Meeting." Reprinted in Navrátil. 64-72, 73-75.
32. "Transcript of the Warsaw Meeting, July 14-15, 1968." Reprinted in Navrátil. 212-233.
33. "The Bratislava Declaration, August 3, 1968." Reprinted in Navrátil. 326-329.
34. Dubček, Alexander. *Hope Dies Last*. 170.
35. Washington Post, as quoted in Dubček. *Hope Dies Last*. 170.
36. Bischof, Karner, and Ruggenthaler. 23.
37. New York Times. "Czech Editor Tells of Events Leading to Invasion." 28 August 1968.
38. Renata Laxova. *Letter to Alexander*. 231. Similar personal histories from 1968 are abundant in literature and media. Prominent examples include *The Prague Spring: A Mixed Legacy* and *The Power of the Powerless* film.
39. Long. 4.
40. Ibid.

41. "Alexander Dubček's Recollections of the Moscow Negotiations and the Moscow Protocol," and "The Moscow Protocol, August 26, 1968." Reprinted in Navrátil. 481-483 and 477-480.

42. Modern Czechs and Slovaks refer to the Prague Spring and the Soviet oppression thereof as being separate events, despite occurring in the same year. The term "Prague Spring" refers to the period of freedom experienced by the citizens. "'68" refers to the military invasion and subsequent harsh suppression of the movement.

43. Judt. 444.

44. Keane, John. *Václav Havel: A Political Tragedy in Six Acts*. Accessed through Long. 7.

45. Brown, J.F. 150.

46. Brown, J.F. 25.

47. Long. 8-9.

48. Skoug, Jr. 238.

49. Williams. 253.

50. Excerpted in Bugajski, Janusz. *Czechoslovakia: Charter 77's Decade of Dissent*. 104-114.

51. Bren. 61.

52. Bugajski. 37.

53. Long. 43.

54. Gorbachev, Mikhail and Zdeněk Mlynár. *Conversations with Gorbachev*. 65. Mlynár and Gorbachev were friends and law school classmates in Moscow, before Mlynár returned to his native Czechoslovakia and served as Secretary of the KSČ under Dubček. Interestingly, Gorbachev's key reforms of the Soviet Union, perestroika and glasnost, closely mirrored those of the Prague Spring. When asked in 1987 about the difference between his reforms and Dubček's leadership in the Prague Spring, Gorbachev replied, "19 years."

55. Judt. 436.

56. Long. 49.

57. Skoug, Jr. 219.

58. Brown, J.F. 170.

59. "Report on Secret Discussions between the CPCz CC International Department and Egon Bahr of the West German Social Democratic Party, April 17-19, 1968." Reprinted in Navrátil. 108-111.

60. Interview with Ivana Doležalová, Journalist. *The Power of the Powerless*. Dir. Cory Taylor.

61. Havel, Václav. *The Power of the Powerless*. 1.

Appendix I

The above is a map representing the state of Soviet occupation in Europe from 1968 to 1989. The Warsaw Pact nations forming the Soviet bloc are Czechoslovakia, Poland, East Germany, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria. The dark line indicates the "Iron Curtain," the division between the democratic West and the Soviet bloc.

"The Eastern Bloc in Europe." Centre Virtuel De La Connaissance Sur L'Europe (CVCE): The Research Infrastructure on European Integration. Web.

Appendix II

Citizens are pushed to the side and a Soviet soldier waves a flag as Soviet tanks roll into Prague in August of 1968 to forcibly suppress the movement that resulted from Dubček's reforms.

Koudelka, Josef. *Prague.* Digital image. The Art Institute of Chicago. August 1968. Web.

Appendix III

"Dubček and Havel side by side… along the arcades people simply gape. They can't believe it. But when he steps out on to the balcony in the frosty evening air, illuminated by television spotlights, the crowds give such a roar as I have never heard. '*Dubček! Dubček!*' echoes off the tall houses up and down the long, narrow square."

Ash, Timothy Garton. *The Magic Lantern: The Revolutions of '89 Witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin, and Prague*. New York: Random House, 1990. 95.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Ash, Timothy Garton. *The Magic Lantern: The Revolutions of '89 Witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin, and Prague*. New York: Random House, 1990. Print.

This book chronicles the Velvet Revolution in Czechoslovakia, as well as the related revolutions of 1989 in Poland, Romania, and East Germany, as witnessed and experienced by the author. Ash was particularly adept at melding his personal experiences with the immediate and historical contexts of the events.

Brown, J. F. "Relations Between the Soviet Union and Its Eastern European Allies: A Survey." *United States Project RAND* (1975). Print.

Written just seven years after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia to suppress the movement initiated by Dubček's reforms, this previously classified document traces the American analysis of the relationship between the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact nations of the Soviet bloc. Brown's work is evidence for the extreme degree to which exchange of information between Czechoslovakia and Western powers was obstructed.

Dubček, Alexander, and Jir Hochman. *Hope Dies Last: The Autobiography of Alexander Dubček.* New York: Kodansha International, 1993. Print.

Published posthumously, the autobiography of Dubček provides fascinating insight into his motivations for the introduction of the reforms. Because Dubček was in a tenuous position as a reformer unable to put revolutionary messages into writing, his work captures, directly from the source, the way in which the reforms evolved over time to fit the dynamic political and social landscape.

Franc, Daniel. *Velvet Revolution Diary.* English translation. November 17-30. Web. <http://www.unisona.com/VelvetRevolutionDiary/>.

The diary of Daniel Franc is an unedited, direct transcript of the records kept by a student dissident studying Prague during the "Velvet Revolution" in 1989. This diary humanized the topic from a mere ideological conflict to one in which dissidents risked their lives and livelihoods.

Havel, Václav. *The Power of the Powerless: Citizens Against the State in Central-Eastern Europe*. Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1985. Print.

This noteworthy source consists of the revolutionary essays of Václav Havel who was a key figure in the Prague Spring movement, stressing the power of the people being oppressed by the Soviet regime. Havel's writings were central to the Velvet Revolution and had great influence on the overthrow of Communism. The "power of the powerless" became an anti-Soviet propaganda phrase used widely throughout the Soviet bloc.

"Internal Organization of the Civic Forum." *Wilson Center Digital Archive*. Institute for Contemporary History, Prague. 28 Nov. 1989. Web. <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/111752>.

This document is the original publication of the Czech Civic Forum, outlining its mission, function, and areas of particular concern and action in the fall of 1989. The publication of this document occurred just two weeks before the eventual Velvet Revolution and restoration of democracy in Czechoslovakia, and therefore evidences the careful planning that occurred underneath the nationalist frenzy that sparked the protests.

Kornai, János. *By Force of Thought: Irregular Memoirs of an Intellectual Journey*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT, 2006. Print.

János Kornai began his adult life as a strong supporter of Soviet socialism, before later becoming a public, vocal critic of its political and economic failures. He served as an emissary between Harvard University and Budapest, Hungary during the turmoil, and influenced the transition to democracy of Soviet bloc countries. His unique perspective as both a participant and academic was invaluable to understanding the events.

Koudelka, Josef. "Josef Koudelka: Nationality Doubtful." *Art Institute of Chicago*. 7 June 2014. Web. <http://www.artic.edu/exhibition/josef-koudelka-nationality-doubtful>.

Josef Koudelka was an amateur photographer in Czechoslovakia in 1968 whose dramatic prints of the Soviet invasion rapidly circulated around the world. During this exhibition in Chicago, his works were publicly available for viewing. The way in which Koudelka frames his photos and selects his subjects to capture the moment evokes both poignancy and strong sentiments of solidarity with Dubček's ideals and reforms.

Koudelka, Josef, Laura Hubber, and Annelisa Stephan. "'We Are All the Same': A Conversation with Josef Koudelka." *The Getty Iris*. 20 Nov. 2014. Web.

Koudelka discusses the themes of freedom and empathy and how he struggled to capture the sentiments of the Czechoslovakian people in a simple photo. He places blame on the Communist governmental setup, not the individuals, as "the Russian soldiers … were invaders. But … as much as it might sound strange, I didn't feel any hatred toward them. I knew they didn't want to be there. They behaved a certain way because their officers ordered them to."

Kusin, Vladimir V. "Ten Years After the Prague Spring: Lessons for Eastern Europe." *International Journal* 33.4 (1978): 663-77. *JSTOR*. Sage Publications, Ltd. Web. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40201684>.

Vladimir V. Kusin presents a sophisticated analysis of the repeated attempts to reform and revitalize Soviet Communism and traces the course of each regime until its ultimate downfall. He provides a compelling argument that the intended "socialism with a human face" is not compatible with the historical

political traditions of the Soviet bloc, and, by extension, that the fall of the regime was inevitable in time.

Laxova, Renata. *Letter to Alexander.* Cincinnati, Ohio: Custom Editorial Productions, 2001. Print.

Renata Laxova was born in Czechoslovakia and, in 1968, she fled to Britain with her children, having to make the choice to leave her parents behind. This book is her memoir, in which she describes heart-wrenchingly candidly the ways in which the invasion of 1968 changed her life forever. This memoir does more to humanize the topic than perhaps any other source, explaining firsthand how people had to choose whether to stand up to the regime or, to put it bluntly, to stay silent and save their lives.

Long, Michael. *Making History: Czech Voices of Dissent and the Revolution of 1989*. Lanham, MD: Rowan & Littlefield, 2005. Print.

This source is a transcript of interviews with leaders of the dissident movement and the Velvet Revolution, woven together with an account of the dissidence and its results. This book was invaluable in that it revealed the intrinsic connection between leadership and legacy, describing the dissenters themselves and the great power the small movement ultimately had.

Matynia, Elzbieta. "Twenty Years Later: A Call for Existential Revolution: Václav Havel in Conversation with Adam Michnik." *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 22.3 (2009): 255-62. *JSTOR*. Web. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25621924>.

This source is a two-part conversation between Havel and Polish intellectual and dissident Adam Michnik, in which both directly compare the Prague Spring movement to the current situation in Russia under President Vladimir Putin. The work of Matynia provides a new and current perspective on the ways in which the themes of the proverbial "Spring" are applicable in the modern day.

Mlynár, Zdenek. *Conversations with Gorbachev: On Perestroika, the Prague Spring, and the Crossroads of Socialism.* New York: Columbia UP, 2002. Print.

Zdenek Mlynár was a leader of the Prague Spring movement and was roommates and close friends with Gorbachev at university. This book is a transcript of the conversations between the two – one a Czech, one a Russian, but both leaders of movements to bring about reformed "socialism with a human face" in two different decades. This provided a fascinatingly candid look at two revolutionaries and their respective regimes.

Mlynár, Zdenek. *Nightfrost in Prague: The End of Humane Socialism.* New York: Karz, 1980. Print.

This source comes from the same author as the previous, and therefore has the inherent perspective of understanding the Soviet aims through his relationship with Gorbachev and other major powers, but yet still personally endorsing democratic and Czechoslovakian ideology. Mlynár worked as

Secretary of the KSČ under Dubček, and therefore has the unique vantage point, writing a memoir, to describe the intent of the Prague Spring reforms, as one of the main supporters.

Navrátil, Jaromir. *The Prague Spring '68.* New York: Central European UP, 1998. Print.

This book weaves together countless previously unreleased historical documents into a narrative account of the Prague Spring and surrounding events from both the Soviet and revolutionary perspectives. Navrátil's work is classified as a primary source because the body of the text contains documents from CPSU meetings including, notably, transcripts of telephone conversations between Brezhnev and Dubček.

Pehe, Jiři. "A Spring Awakening for Human Rights." New York Times. 14 Aug. 2008. <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/24/opinion/24pehe.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0>.

Pehe lived in Prague during the Prague Spring movement, and in this article argues that the true importance of the Prague Spring in history lies not in its immediate effects of liberalizing Czechoslovakia, but rather that "it generated ideas that survived — especially its emphasis on human rights. A strong effort was made to build a robust civil society. Today, as the Western world seeks to revive popular interest in the democratic process, this is the Prague Spring's most important legacy."

Pehe, Jiří. "Post-Communist Reflections of the Prague Spring." 7 Oct. 2008. <http://www.pehe.cz/Members/redaktor/post-communist-refections-of-the-prague-spring>.

Pehe was a leader of the dissident movements following the Prague Spring and of the Velvet Revolution and served as Havel's external political advisor during his presidency. Now a Czechoslovakian political analyst and professor at New York University in Prague, Pehe's work was invaluable in characterizing the overlap between the political and ideological legacies of the Prague Spring.

Pehe, Jiři, ed. *The Prague Spring: A Mixed Legacy.* New York: Freedom House, 1988. Print.

Notable for its publication just one year before the ultimate democratization of Czechoslovakia in 1989, this text compiles a wide range of editorials and narratives written by prominent playwrights and core members of the dissident movement. Pehe's work traces the threads tying 1968 to 1989 in the eyes of revolutionaries over several three decades, and reveals that the leaders of the moment thought themselves in favorable position on the eve of the revolution.

"Proclamation on the Establishment of Civic Forum." *Making the History of 1989*. Roy Rozenweig Center for History and Media Archives. 19 Nov. 1989. Web. <https://chnm.gmu.edu/1989/archive/files/est-of-civic-forum_5da30de396.pdf>.

The Civic Forum was established in response to brutal and violent retaliation to peaceful student protests days prior. This piece, addressed to the common people of Czechoslovakia, publicly endorses plans for a general strike with the intent "to negotiate immediately with the government about the critical situation in our country." The countless parallels that can be drawn between the proclamation and revolutionary documents such as Charter 77 reaffirm that the movement is a continuation of the suppressed Prague Spring.

Skilling, H. Gordon. "'The Spring That Never Ends': A Review Article." *International Journal* 32.4 (1977): 865-79. *JSTOR*. Canadian International Council. Web. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40201603>.

H. Gordon Skilling was a Canadian political scientist expert notable for his active involvement and participation in the overthrow of the Communist state in Czechoslovakia during both the Prague Spring and the Velvet Revolution. He adeptly characterizes the theme of the "unending Spring" which transcends Czechoslovakia and applies to the very nature of revolution and the balance of power itself.

Skoug Jr., Kenneth N. *Czechoslovakia's Lost Fight for Freedom, 1967-1969: An American Embassy Perspective.* Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1999. Print.

The author of this book is a Czech-American diplomat living in Prague from 1967-1969. Skoug not only provides a meticulous overview of the development of the unrest in Czechoslovakia, but also demonstrates firsthand the amount of information conveyed between the Eastern Bloc and Western powers – unprecedented before the Prague Spring.

Svec, Milan. "The Prague Spring: 20 Years Later." *Foreign Affairs* 66.5 (1988): 981-1001. *JSTOR*. Web. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20043574>.

On the eve of 1989, Milan Svec is distinctly insightful in his analysis of the political and economic conflict in Eastern Europe and his predictions for the future. Granted asylum in the United States from Czechoslovakia in 1985, Svec was intimately familiar with the workings of the KSČ apparatus, and predicted that the deepening Soviet crisis and newfound liberalization produced "Czechoslovak leadership [that was] crumbling fast." Svec highlights the vastly different perceptions of Soviet power and inside and outside the system in Czechoslovakia.

"The Civic Forum's Exposition of its Position in Public Life with a Call for Nonviolence, Tolerance, and Dialogue." *Wilson Center Digital Archive*. Institute for Contemporary History, Prague. 20 Nov. 1989. Web. <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/111749>.

In this document, the Civic Forum, led by Václav Havel, promotes itself in the public sphere as "an absolutely open society of people who feel themselves responsible for the positive resolution of the untenable political situation." It characterizes the aims of the opposition movement forming in Czechoslovakia as being nonviolent, and lays the ideological foundation for the peaceful protests of the Velvet Revolution weeks later.

Video. "The Prague Spring of 1968: Czech Uprising Against The Soviets." *World News*. Web. <http://wn.com/The_Prague_Spring_of_1968_Czech_uprising_against_the_Soviets>.

This source shows clips of the Prague Spring uprisings in Czechoslovakia, which were ultimately suppressed by the Soviet military under the orders of Leonid Brezhnev. This clip was released by the American media, and therefore provides evidence of the amount of knowledge that Western nations had of the amount of control that the Soviet Union had amassed in Eastern Europe.

Zeman, Z. A. B. *Prague Spring*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1969. Print.

This source is an eyewitness account detailing life during the Prague Spring prior to the Soviet invasion in August. This book had a particularly unique viewpoint by virtue of the fact that the West was wholly unaware of conditions in Czechoslovakia until the Prague Spring. Books published such as this one helped elucidate the state of the Soviet Bloc.

Secondary Sources

Arrighi, Giovanni, Terence K. Hopkins and Immanuel Wallerstein. "1989, the Continuation of 1968." *Fernand Braudel Center Review* 15.2 (1992): 221-242. *JSTOR*. Web. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40241219>.

The work of Arrighi, Hopkins, and Wallerstein critically analyzes the way in which the upheaval of Communism in Czechoslovakia in 1989 is a direct continuation of the events that transpired in Prague in 1968. They provide a political and economic basis on which the rallying cry "We ask you people of '68 to join us students of '89" can be bolstered.

Batyuk, Vladimir. "The End of the Cold War: A Russian View." *History Today.* 1999.

The greatest success of Batyuk's work is the ability to recognize and work around the inherent bias that must be present in the analysis of the fall of a major, polarizing ideology and world power. Batyuk provided a comprehensive historical and cultural analysis of the ways in which different groups of people within the Soviet Union and Russia perceived the fall of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War.

Bischof, Günter, Stefan Karner, and Peter Ruggenthaler. *The Prague Spring and the Warsaw Pact Invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968*. Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2010. Print.

This book considers the Prague Spring as the turning point for the progression of events in Soviet Bloc, and for the Cold War in Europe as a whole. This source used sources from two dozen countries in an attempt to quantify the legacies of the Prague Spring.

Bolton, Jonathan. "Worlds of Dissent: Charter 77, the Plastic People of the Universe, and Czech Culture Under Communism." Foreign Affairs. Council

on Foreign Relations, Inc., 1 Sept. 2012. Web. <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/137937/jonathan-bolton/worlds-of-dissent-charter-77-the-plastic-people-of-the-universe>.

This article provides a succinct summary of the dissident movement that arose during the period of "Normalization." This source detailed their exact movements and actions without detracting from their courage or political influence. Thus "Worlds of Dissent" was critical in explaining the technicalities of exactly how the movement left its legacies.

Bren, Paulina. *The Greengrocer and His TV: The Culture of Communism After the 1968 Prague Spring*. Ithaca N.Y.: Cornell UP, 2010. Print.

This source is a book describing the nature of life under Soviet occupation in Czechoslovakia. Using the metaphor of the greengrocer from the essays of Havel, this book was particularly useful in capturing the pent-up desire for freedom and how that came to influence the eventual overthrow of the Communist regime.

Brown, Archie. *The Rise and Fall of Communism*. New York: Ecco, 2009. Print.

This book discusses the rise and dissolution of the Soviet Union in terms of all potential and intertwined factors. It contextualized the Prague Spring not only within the Soviet Union, but also within the evolution of the ideological framework of Communist and socialist thought worldwide. Brown demonstrated that the leadership of Alexander Dubček and ultimate legacy of democratization was *not* an isolated incident within the broader scope of twentieth century human history, but that the cycle repeats itself.

Brown, J. F.. *Surge to Freedom: The End of Communist Rule in Eastern Europe*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1991. Print.

J. F. Brown's work is particularly compelling, because he, as an author, is remarkably adept at capturing the sentiment behind the "surge to freedom" that has pervaded Western retellings of democratization and the rapid fall of the Soviet Union. He drew insightful parallels between each revolution.

Bugajski, Janusz. *Czechoslovakia: Charter 77's Decade of Dissent.* New York: Praeger, 1987. Print.

This source is an extremely detailed account of the dissident movement and the rise and fall of Charter 77 in Czechoslovakia. It was particularly useful in explaining how the gap was bridged between the freedom of the Prague Spring and that of the Velvet Revolution.

Carter, Julia K. "After the Fall: Globalizing the Remnants of the Communist Bloc." *Economic Letter* 2.2 (2007): FEB. *Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas*. Web.

This journal provided an economic evaluation of the former Soviet bloc provinces after the fall of Communism, which contextualized the Prague Spring, the brutal suppression thereof, and the Velvet Revolution of 1989 within a

broader geopolitical time frame, reinforcing with statistics that Soviet bloc economies thrived after liberalization.

Chafetz, Glenn R. *Gorbachev, Reform, and the Brezhnev Doctrine: Soviet Policy Toward Eastern Europe, 1985-1990*. Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 1993. Print.

Chafetz consolidates a collection of academic essays from various sources, detailing the abandonment of the threat of military intervention in the Soviet bloc and its impact on the collapse of Communist rule. Chafetz' work was particularly noteworthy in juxtaposition with sources detailing Brezhnev and his role in Soviet politics, as they together demonstrated the way in which the revolutionary fervors of 1989 were a continuation of those in Prague, 1968.

Confidential Cable 08153 from U.S. Embassy Prague, "Student Strike Situation Report." November 21, 1989. 18:59.

This cable contains the official transcript of messages sent from the U.S. Embassy in Prague to the United States during the Velvet Revolution. This conveyed the extent of information that reached Western powers in a time of severe censorship and closed media channels, and presented the atmosphere of the student protests through a strictly anti-Soviet lens. This is classified as a secondary source due to the lack of direct involvement of with the Prague Spring movement.

Elst, Michiel. *Copyright, Freedom of Speech, and Cultural Policy in the Russian Federation*. Lieden: Brill & Nijhoff, 2004. Print.

Elst's work, a compliation of essays from various academics, details the overlap between the abstract concepts of free speech and censorship and the way in which they are made tangible in written law. This was particularly significant in revealing the way in which the law was manipulated for the purposes of propaganda in Prague.

Grigor Suny, Ronald. "Empire Falls: The Revolutions of 1989." *The Nation*. Web. <http://www.thenation.com/article/empire-falls-revolutions-1989#>.

The work of Grigor Suny draws parallels between the Velvet Revolution and the overthrow of regimes in other Soviet bloc nations. With an American point of view, this summary encompasses long-term legacies of the Prague Spring as perceived in the West.

Herd, Graeme P., and Jennifer D. P. Moroney. *Security Dynamics in the Former Soviet Bloc*. Hoboken: Taylor and Francis, 2013. Print.

This book focused on the "democratic security" of former Soviet socialist republics, and provided quite insightful analysis into the extent of democratization in various areas of the Soviet Union at various points in time. It evaluated the concept of democratization in both an ideological and economic context.

Judt, Tony. *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945*. New York: Penguin Press, 2005. Print.

This book covered a very large time frame – from the end of the Second World War until the modern day. In this way, this was a very helpful source, because it effectively captured the deep-rooted causes and long-term effects of the Prague Spring. Perhaps even more importantly, it highlighted similar themes and uprisings in history.

Kennedy, David M. *Freedom From Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945.* New York: Oxford UP, 1999. Print.

While it does not cover the time period of the Prague Spring, Kennedy's contains a excellent and concise overview of the birth of the Soviet Union, the Munich Agreement, and the beginnings of the Stalinist reign of terror, all of which contributed to the political climate in Eastern Europe decades later.

Kotkin, Stephen. *Armageddon Averted: The Soviet Collapse, 1970-2000*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001. Print.

This source provided me with a unique and very well researched perspective on the collapse of the Soviet Union, as Kotkin is an American at the forefront of the Soviet studies movement, whose writing is largely based in interviews with former Soviet and Russian citizens. This was relevant to place the Prague Spring and the events that transpired in Czechoslovakia into their broader historical contexts.

Laar, Mart, and Marko Mihkelson. *The Power of Freedom: Central and Eastern Europe After 1945*. Brussels: Centre for European Studies, 2010. Print.

This book provided a comprehensive overview of the themes of democracy, freedom, and occupation in Eastern Europe after the end of World War II. The work of Laar and Mihkleson was particularly adept at both covering a remarkably wide time frame and focusing on the people living in Europe and their responsibilities and governmental rights during the times of political tension.

Maas, Alan. "The Revolutions of 1989." *The Socialist Worker*. Web. 2009. <http://socialistworker.org/2009/11/12/revolutions-of-1989>.

Although the vast majority of sources written close to the modern day take democratic standpoints on the topic, this article increased the depth of analysis in incorporating a wholly different ideological system into the description of the events that transpired. Instead of lauding the fall of Communism and being pro-democracy, it has very modern pro-socialist undertones.

McNamee, Dardis, and Lenka Rombova. "Prague Spring Remembered." The Vienna Review. 1 May 2008. Web. <http://www.viennareview.net/news/front-page/prague-spring-remembered>.

This is an article from the Vienna Review, a cultural journal of Eastern and Central Europe. The work of McNamee and Rombova is particularly noteworthy in providing the opening quote to the paper, "They may crush the

flowers, but they cannot stop the Spring," and placing it in cultural context. It summarizes the themes of oppression, freedom, and the ongoing cycles of power in proverbial form.

Narayanswamy, Ramnath. "Czechoslovakia: A Defeat for Reformers?" *Economic and Political Weekly* 23.48 (1988): 2527-530. *JSTOR*. Web. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4394051>.

Indian economics professor Narayanswamy presents the view held by most people outside the Soviet system on the eve of the Velvet Revolution, highlighting the irony that "under the relatively more liberal umbrella of the Gorbachev initiative, the economic system that has crystallized itself since then continues to be a far cry from the radical beginnings of the Prague Spring." As the ultimate democratization of Czechoslovakia came just one year later, his 1988 article is evidence that the vast majority of global powers believed the suppression of the Prague Spring was evidence of the indestructibility of the Soviet Union.

Shtromas, Alexandras, Robert K. Faulkner, and Daniel J. Mahoney. *Totalitarianism and the Prospects for World Order: Closing the Door on the Twentieth Century*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2003. Online.

In the first portion of this book the author gives a first-hand account of the Soviet occupations of his country, providing a very personal and humanizing account of life under Soviet influence. This book is classified as a secondary source because it was completed and published posthumously by a historian.

The Power of the Powerless. Dir. Cory Taylor. Perf. Jeremy Irons (Narrator). Agora Productions, 2010. DVD.

This documentary explores the events of the Prague Spring and the overthrow of the Czechoslovakian socialist regime, and how the writing of Havel and that of other dissidents impacted the course of the events. This film is "currently being used by human rights organizations to encourage dissidents struggling in non-democratic countries" worldwide, and thus demonstrates of the major legacy of the Prague Spring and the ultimate fall of Communism in Czechoslovakia.

"Twenty-Five Years After the Fall of the Iron Curtain: The State of Integration of East and West in the European Union." *European Commission* (2014). Web. <http://ec.europa.eu/research/socialsciences/pdf/policy_reviews/east-west_integration.pdf>.

This journal consolidates the geo-historical conflict surrounding the Iron Curtain and the subsequent shifting economic, political, social, and cultural dynamics. The work of the European Commission highlights the way in which the democratization of Czechoslovakia did not, by any means, bring about a perfect, thriving nation, and evidenced the effect the revolution still has on the modern Czech Republic and Slovakia.

Unclassified Cable #08087 from Prague to the Department, "Embassy Protest of Attack on American Journalists during November 17-19 Demonstrations in Prague," November 20, 1989, 12:20.

This cable displays text from relations between the Czechoslovakian government and the international media during the Velvet Revolution. This source was particularly relevant when juxtaposed with news releases prior to 1989, as this difference shows the drastic impact that liberalization had upon the media releases in Czechoslovakia.

Williams, Kieran. *The Prague Spring and Its Aftermath: Czechoslovak Politics, 1968-1970.* Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997. Print.

Williams adeptly critiques the high political fallout in Czechoslovakia and plausibility of successfully introducing reforms under the stronghold of the Soviet Union. His academic analysis is grounded in heavy and resourceful use of Czechoslovakian archival materials, and the text as a whole effectively constructs a narrative for the transition between the suppression of the Prague Spring and the beginning of the dissident movement.

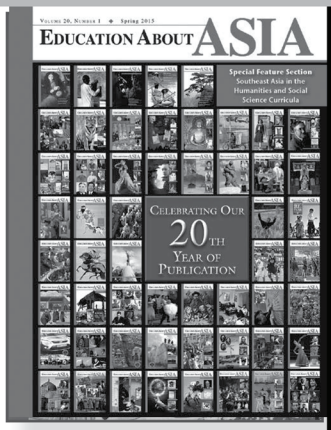
Teach About Asia  Learn About Asia

visit www.asian-studies.org

EDUCATION ABOUT ASIA

- A practical teaching resource for secondary school, college, and university instructors.
- An invaluable source of information for students, scholars, libraries, and anyone interested in Asia.
- Stimulating articles & essays.
- Useful guides and reviews.
- New online archives.
- Special offers on back issues.
- Sample thematic issues on topics of particular interest include: Islam in Asia, Marriage and Family in Asia, Youth Culture, Religion in Asia, Economics and Business in Asia, Visual and Performing Arts, and an Asia in World History special series.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY at www.asian-studies.org/EAA.



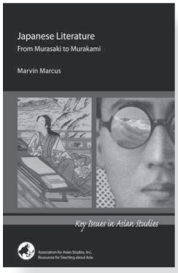
CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF PUBLICATION!

* AVAILABLE NOW *

Complimentary full open online access to all issues of EAA since 1996.

The expanded availability of *Education About Asia* is an exciting prospect for all who are interested in improving the understanding of Asia in secondary schools, community colleges, and colleges and universities. Please support EAA by subscribing to the print issue and help us promote EAA by informing your colleagues, students, educators, and librarians about this excellent teaching resource.

KEY ISSUES IN ASIAN STUDIES



New 2015 Title:

Japanese Literature: From Murasaki to Murakami

by Marvin Marcus

Key Issues in Asian Studies books are designed for use in undergraduate humanities and social science courses, as well as by advanced high school students and their teachers. These books introduce students to major cultural and historical themes and are meant to encourage classroom debate and discussion. The AAS plans to publish 2-3 books each year.

ORDER NOW! Please visit the AAS website for a complete list of titles.

Association for Asian Studies, Inc.