Introduction

PAUL R GREGORY & MARSHALL GOLDMAN

University of Houston, Houston, USA and Davis Center, Harvard University, USA.
E-mail: pgregory@mail.uh.edu

Comparative Economic Studies (2005) **47**, 239. doi:10.1057/palgrave.ces.8100107

In many circles, Abram Bergson is regarded as the 'Father of Comparative Economics.' It is therefore fitting that this collection of essays and testimonials, written in his honor, be published as a special edition of a field journal *Comparative Economic Studies* of the Association of Comparative Economic Studies. The essays have as a common core the efficiency of the socialist economic system, typically as deduced from Soviet experience, and as reflected in economic performance and in analysis of working arrangements. The essays on working arrangements are notable in that most of them use data from the formerly secret Soviet state and party archives – material that Bergson could only dream of using during his years of active research. Moreover, they touch upon issues such as forced labour and defense that were hidden behind thick veils of secrecy. The testimonials, written by his own colleagues, reflect on Abram Bergson's path breaking contributions to welfare economics and to comparative economics and address the general issue of 'Bergson as a scholar.' Readers are also referred to the bibliography of Abram Bergson's writings and John Hardt, 'Abram Bergson and the Development of Soviet Economic Studies, Problems of Post-Communism' July–August 2004.

We are particularly grateful to the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, Harvard University; the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution, and Peace, Stanford University, and to the Cullen Foundation, Houston, Texas, for their support of the Conference 'Performance and Efficiency in the USSR: New Measurements and the Bergson Legacy' in Memory of Abram Bergson, held at the Davis Center, Harvard University, 22–23 November 2003, for which most of the papers in this collection were prepared. The Special Editors would like to thank all authors collectively and also Jeffrey Miller, Editor of *Comparative Economic Studies*, for his contribution to this publication.