

ANT 3930 and EUS 3400

Anthropology of Eastern Europe and Postsocialism

University of Florida

Fall 2012

Instructor: Prof. Maria Stoilkova

Anthropology Department / Center for European Studies

Meets: Tues: period 7 (1:55 – 2:45) @ TUR Room: 2333
Thurs: periods 7-8 (1:55 – 3:50) @ TUR Room: 2333

Office hours: Tue: 3-5 pm @ 3345 TUR
Wed: 1-3 pm @ 3345 TUR
(if inconvenient, make an appointment to meet separately)

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(preferably please use for email the internal email system within E-Learning)

Course Description

This course looks at the societies of Eastern Europe in the midst of rapid and momentous change, which has occurred in the last 20 years since the fall of communism. It examines the processes and particulars of what have become known as the “transitions from socialism to capitalism”. The course also gives an opportunity to revisit some of the major political and social developments in the world during and after the Cold War, and raise principal questions about capitalism, development, modernity and our “common global future”. Today, facing the trappings of our globalizing world, a perspective on one of the most dramatic and rapid economic, social and cultural transformations in Eastern Europe of the last 20 years, might suggest new ways of approaching the challenging questions of the role of states and markets in balancing the wellbeing of societies.

We will address the field of *postsocialist studies* from a distinctly anthropological perspective: that is, one that begins by exploring the daily lives of people, and how they have struggled and manage to redefine their experiences in light of the new institutions and logic of economic and social activities unpacking since the 1990s. An anthropological perspective takes as its goal an enhanced comprehension of how postsocialist lives are defined, experienced and understood by those living them. In so doing, we will focus on the contradictions, paradoxes and ambiguities of postsocialism by looking closely at emerging forms of nationalism, gender relations, language use, production and consumption, identification with place, and new assumptions about identity, memory, personhood and nation.

Here are some of the questions we will be tackling in this class. Why are so many Eastern Europeans today distrustful of politics, and globalization more generally? Why are they feeling increasingly nostalgic for a period that has been described as among the worst “totalitarian experiments” in Europe? To what extent the *transitions* launched by Eastern European governments in the wake of 1989 that aimed to bring these societies within the orbit of democracy and market economy represent unique “post-socialist” constructs, or do they reflect a broader “reorganization of the world” led by the emergence of such powerful institutions as the World Bank and the IMF?

The course materials draw from recent ethnographic writing on the topic, some historical accounts on socialism, and finally from journalistic accounts, film and fiction writing. These aim to provide a more balanced picture of the various responses – academic, journalistic as well as artistic – to postsocialism.

At the end of the course, students should be acquainted with

- academic and public debates about the “transitions” in Europe
- a more detailed knowledge of some particular cases in select countries in the region
- theoretical and ethical perspectives on socio-cultural issues, human rights concerns, ect, surrounding rapid political and social change under globalization

Course Format

The course will consist of lectures, discussion, in-class activities and student presentations. The instructor will deliver lectures geared toward providing (historically, politically, and theoretically) contextualizing information. The purpose of lectures will be to review the major conceptual points of each new topic and to integrate the material. You are expected to attend each class and to have completed assigned readings, so that we can use class meetings to discuss points of particular interest or difficulty and to move beyond the information presented in the texts. You are required to read at least the text marked in black. There also will be screenings of films and some documentaries, aimed at “visualizing” some of the main debates and representations of Eastern Europe today. Screenings are announced in advance and will be shown during the 2-hour time slots of the class. The visual material is an essential part of course and students are required to attend screenings.

Course Requirements and Grading

Materials for this class will be generally available in electronic format via E-learning.

Articles from academic journals are accessible through the UF electronic database on the UF library web page. Students are expected to retrieve these articles themselves. Should you need help using the web page, please consult a librarian.

Some of the pieces might be also available through a general google search on the internet.

I recommend two books, which we will use extensively in the class available from online retailers:

Katherine Verdery 1997. *What Was Socialism and What Comes Next?* Princeton University Press

Kristen Ghodsee, 2011. "Lost in Transition" Duke University Press

Your final grade has three components: a discussion participation grade (10 percent); an in-class presentation (30 percent); and two short reaction papers (30 percent each)

The course is designed so as to help students to formulate and express their own ideas on the themes taken up. Therefore, **discussion** is an integral component of the course, and **10%** of the grade will be based on participation in **class discussions**.

Students will also be expected to give **in-class presentations**, which will fill in another **30%** of their final grade. The in-class presentation is a summary of an assigned article from the weekly class readings (about. 15 min). To facilitate a discussion on the reading 3 other students will be responsible to frame questions on the presented material.

The remaining **60%** of the class grade will be based on the preparation of **two short reaction papers** (4-5 pages, font 12, double-spaced) responding to class material, typed up and turned in, as scheduled in the syllabus. Each reaction paper address **at least 3** readings (articles or chapters from books as listed in the syllabus) and incorporates material from the beginning of the previous due date to the due date of the current assignment.

Alternatively students may choose to work on a research project of their own, consulting the topic with the instructor prior to the deadline for the first assignment.

First paper due: Oct. 25

Second paper due: Nov. 29

Grading scale: A (90-100), A- (87-89), B+ (84-86), B (80- 83), B- (77-79), C+ (74-76), C (70-73), C- (67-69), D+ (64-66), D (60-63), D- (57-59), E (<57).

Academic Integrity

Academic honesty is not only an ethical issue but also the foundation of scholarship. Cheating and plagiarism are therefore serious breaches of academic integrity. Documented plagiarism of a paper will be given a "D" in instances of one or two sentences, and an "F" in more severe cases, and no revision will be allowed in either instance.

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Please refer to the Disability Resource Center @ <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>: 0020 Reid Hall Phone: (352) 392-8565

UF Counseling Services

Resources are available on-campus for students having personal problems or lacking clear career and academic goals that interfere with their academic performance. These resources include:

- University Counseling Center, 301 Peabody Hall, 392-1575, personal and career

counseling

- Student Mental Health, Student Health Care Center, 392-1171, personal counseling
- Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 392-1161, sexual counseling
- Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601, career development assistance and counseling.

Syllabus Change Policy

This syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advanced notice. It is students' responsibility to be aware of changes in the schedule of readings, which will be announced in class as well as on e-Learning (in the)

Week 1 / Aug 28, 30 – Introduction: Eastern Europe through a historical perspective

For your general orientation see: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eastern_Europe

Vaclav Havel, 1989. “The Power of the Powerless”. From: *Living in Truth*. Faber and Faber, London [available on the web at: <http://www.vaclavhavel.cz/index.php?sec=6&id=2&kat=&from=6&setln=2>]

Week 2 / Sep 4, 6 – Ordering and Living the Everyday of Socialism

Slavenka Draculić. 1991. “Make-Up and Other Crucial Questions; On Doing Laundry; Forward to the Past.” In: *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed*. New York: Norton and Co. (Pp. 21-32; 43-54; 66-75).

Katherine Verdery. 1997. “The Etatisation of Time in Ceasescu’s Romania”. From: *What Was Socialism and What Comes Next?* Princeton University Press. Pp. 39–58

Week 3 / Sep 11, 13 – And What Was Socialism?

Ghodsee, K 2011. “Lost in Transition” pages 1-35.

Gerald Mars, 2003. “The CIA and the KGB: Paranoia is a Two Way Mirror” In: *Anthropology Today*, Vol.19 Num.4 Aug. Pp. 22-23.

Film: “The Life of Others”

Week 4 / Sep 18, 20 – Socialism’s Collapse: Dreams of a Once and Future Nation

Ghodsee, K 2011. “Lost in Transition” pages 36-45.

Katherine Verdery. 1997. “What was Socialism and Why did it Fall? From: *What Was Socialism and What Comes Next?* Princeton University Press. Pp. 19-39

Michael Burawoy Katherine Verdery, 1999. Introduction. In: *Uncertain Transition: Ethnographies of Change*. Lanham, MD: Rowman&Littlefield

Week 5 / Sep 25, 27 – Understanding the “Transition”

First paper due!!!!

Guilhot, N 2007. “Reforming the World”. In: *Critical Sociology* 33:447-477.

Krastev, Ivan. 2009 “The Greengrocer’s Revenge”. In: *Prospect*, Sep

Caroline Humphrey, 2002. “Creating Culture of Disillusionment” From: *The Unmaking of Soviet Life: Everyday Economies After Socialism*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Bugajski, Janusz 2006 Western Investment in Central and Eastern Europe. In: *The Analyst* (available on the web)

Mihelj Sabina. 2011. Negotiating Cold War Culture at the Crossroads of East and West. In: *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 53(3) 509-539

Week 6 / Oct 2, 4 – New and Old Elites, Subjects and Objects of Capitalism

Palska, Hanna. 2009. Casting off the coat of Konrad” In: *Studies of East European Thought* 61:249-269

Ghodsee, K 2011. “Lost in Transition” pages 123-130

Kathryn Verdery, 1997. “Faith, Hope and Caritas in the Land of the Pyramids, Romania, 1990-194.” From: *What Was Socialism and What Came Next?* (Pp. 168-203).

Bauman, Zygmunt. 1987. “Intellectuals in East-Central Europe” In: *East European Politics and Societies*, 1:162

Ries N, 2002. “Honest Bandits” and “warped people,” Russian narratives about money, corruption and moral decay”. In: *Ethnography in Unstable Places*. Greenhouse C, Mertz E, Warren K Eds. Duke University Press, Pp. 276-315

Week 7 / Oct. 9, 11 – Surviving Transition and the Market

Olga Shevchenko. 2002. “In Case of Fire Emergency: Consumption, Security, and the Meaning of Durables in a Transforming society,” *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 2:2, pp. 147-167 [Available on the web]

Jack R. Friedman. 2007. “Shame and the Experience of Ambivalence on the Margins of the Global: Pathologizing the Past and Present in Romania’s Industrial Wastelands”. In: *Ethnos* Vol. 35, Issue 2, pp. 235–264

W Humphrey C, 2003. “Stalin and the Blue Elephant”. In: *Transparency and Conspiracy*, HG West, T. Sanders, Eds. Duke University Press. Pp. 175-203

Humphrey C, 2003. Traders, “Disorder” and Citizenship Regimes in Provincial Russia. In: *The Unmaking of Soviet Life: Everyday Economies After Socialism*. Pp. 69-99

Week 8 / Oct. 16, 18– Nationalisms in the Wreckage (former Yugoslavia)

Biehl, J and Locke, P 2010. “Deluze and the Anthropology of Becoming”. In: *Current Anthropology*. Vol 51. N3. (Read the second part of the article by Locke)

Eric Gordy. 1999. “The Destruction of Musical Alternatives.” From: *The Culture of Power in Serbia: Nationalism and the Destruction of Alternatives*. Pennsylvania State University Press.

Maja Korac. 1998. Ethnic Nationalism, Wars and the Patterns of Social Political and Sexual Violence against Women. In: *Identities* Vol. 5(2)

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/bosnian-war-refugees/10116.html>

Film: “No man’s land” dir. Danis Tanovic

Week 9 / Oct. 23, 25 – An Economy of Shifting Identities

First paper due!!!

Janine Wedel. 2003. “Mafia Without Malfeasance, Clans Without Crime: The Criminality Conundrum in Post-Communist Europe”. From: *Crime’s Power: Anthropologists and the Ethnography of Crime*. Ph. Parnell and Stephanie C. Kane, Eds. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. (Pp. 221–244).

Daphne Berdahl, 2005 “The Spirit of Capitalism and the Boundaries of Citizenship in the Post-Wall Germany”. In: *Society for the Comparative Study of Society and History*. 47: 235-251

Nikolov J. 1997. “Crime and Corruption and Communism, Organized Crime in Bulgaria.” In: *East European Constitutional Review* 6. (Available on the web at: www.law.nyu.edu/eecr/vol6num4/feature/organizedcrime.html)

Phoebe Eaton, 2004. “How Much is that In Rubles”. In: *New York Magazine* 9/20

Week 10 / Oct. 30, Nov 1 – Globalizing Intimacies

Jennifer Patico, 2009. "For Love, Money, or Normalcy: Meanings of Strategy and Sentiment in the Russian-American Matchmaking Industry." *Ethnos* 74 (3): 307-330

Partridge Damani, 2008 “We Were Dancing in the Club, Not on the Berlin Wall: Black Bodies, Street Bureaucrats, and Exclusionary Incorporation into the New Europe:” In: *Cultural Anthropology*. Vol. 23. Is. 4. November (Pages 660 - 687)

Bloch A 2003. Victims of Trafficking or entrepreneurial women? Narratives of Post-Soviet Entrepreneurs in Turkey. In *Can. Woman Studies* 22(3-4) Pp.:152-58

Week 11 / Nov 6, 8 – The Gender of Postsocialism

Susan Gal and Gail Kligman. 2002. “Reproduction as Politics.” From *The Politics of Gender After Socialism: A Comparative Historical Essay*. Princeton University Press. (Pp. 15-36).

The globalization of gender: Ally McBeal in post-socialist Slovenia *European Journal of Cultural Studies* May 2005 8: 239-255,

Matti Bunzl. 2000. "The Prague Experience: Gay Male Sex Tourism and the Neocolonial Invention of an Embodied Border." From: *Altering States: Ethnographies of Transition in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union*. University of Michigan Press. (Pp. 70-95).

Kristen Ghodsee, 2007. "Religious Freedoms versus Gender Equality: Faith-Based Organizations, Muslim Minorities and Islamic Headscarves in Modern Bulgaria," *Social Politics*, (Vol. 14, No. 4)

Marody M, Giza-Poleszczuk A. 2000. "Changing Images of Identity in Poland: from the Self-Sacrificing to the Self-Investing Woman? From: *Reproducing Gender*, S Gal, G Kligman Eds. Princeton: Princeton. (Pp. 151-174).

Week 12 / Nov 13, 15 – Instructor will be absent, attending the Annual Anthropological Meetings

Film: "4 Months, 3 Weeks, and 2 Days", Winner of the Cannes Palme d'Or 2007, Dir Cristian Mungiu (Please watch on Amazon)

Week 13 / Nov 20 (Note: 22 no class -Thanksgiving) – **Ethnic Micropolitics: The Roma of Eastern Europe**

David Scheffel, 2008. Ethnic micropolitics in Eastern Europe. A case study from Slovakia's Gypsy. Archipelago. In: *Anthropology Today*. Vol. 24, Num 4.

Carol Silverman. 1995. "Persecution and Politicization: Roma (Gypsies) of Eastern Europe." In: *Cultural Survival Quarterly*. (Pp. 43-49).

Week 14 / Nov 27, 29 – **On Nostalgia and Populism**
Second paper due!!!

Shevtchenko, Olga and Nadkarni, M, 2004. "The politics of nostalgia: A case for comparative analysis of postsocialist practices" In: *Ab Imperio: Theory and History of Nationalities and Nationalism in the Post-Soviet Realm*, vol. 2, 2004 [available on the web at: <http://www.williams.edu/anthsoc/shevchenko.php>]

Kalb, D. 2009. "Conversations with a Polish populist..." In: *American Ethnologist*. 2:207-223.

Todorova, Maria 2010 Introduction. From: *From Utopia to Propaganda and Back*. Berghalm Books

Week 15 / Dec 4 – **Eastern Europe in the Orbit of Globalization and Development**

Kalb D. 2004 Conflicting domains of globalization and development From *Globalization and Development*

Zizek Slavoj 2009 20 Years of Collapse. Op-ED Contribution. The New York Times Nov 9.

