

Draft 12/28/2010

# **ANT 3930 / EUS 3930: Anthropology of Eastern Europe and Postsocialism**

**University of Florida**

**Spring 2011**

**Instructor: Maria Stoilkova**

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**Meets:**

Tues: 1:55 – 2:45 @ Turlington 1315

Thurs: 1:55 – 3:50 @ Turlington 1315

**Office Hrs:**

Thurs: 4 – 6 and by appointment @ Turlington 3345

**Course Description:**

This course looks at the societies of Eastern Europe in the midst of rapid and momentous change. It examines the processes and particulars of what have become known as the “transitions from socialism to capitalism”, providing also a historical perspective to this shift. To what extent do the so-defined “transitional” projects, launched by Eastern European governments in the wake of 1989, projects which goal meant to bring these countries within the orbit of democracy and market economy, mimic Western institutional experience, and whose interests they reflect? Or are these “transitions” rather represent unique “post-socialist” constructs? How are Eastern Europeans now made members of their transforming states and societies differently, from what it was during socialism; and how are “postsocialist” countries claiming membership in the post-Cold War geo-political space at large?

We will approach 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 manage to redefine their experiences in light of new institutions and logic of economic and social activities.

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. The course materials draw from recent ethnographic writing on the topic, some historical accounts on socialism, and finally from journalistic accounts, film and fiction writings.

**Course design:**

The instructor will deliver lectures geared toward providing (historically, politically, and theoretically) contextualizing information and helping students understand a set of readings, which represent the field of postsocialist studies in anthropology.

In addition, we will be watching also films, which will be used not only to “visualize” some of the topics raised by the readings, but to add another discursive layer to the discussions on culture, art and politics in Eastern Europe. Screenings follow the syllabus, unless some shifts are necessary (due to additionally planned student presentations) and will be announced in advance. Films are shown during the 2-hour time slots of the class. The visual material is an essential part of the course and students are required to attend screenings.

**Text requirements:**

All journal articles are available for students to download electronically through the **UF library webpage**. Additionally, book chapters and other material, that are not available through the UF library will be uploaded on **the class webpage in Sakai**.

**I recommend students buy the following books:**

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

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

Caroline Humphrey 2003. *The Unmaking of Soviet Life: Everyday Economies After Socialism*. Cornell University Press

**Course Assignments and Assessment:**

Attendance in class is a requirement!!!

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 discretionary **15%** of the grade will be based on participation in **class discussions**.

Students will also be expected to give **one in-class presentation**, which will fill in another **25%** of the final grade. The presentation covers a chosen article from the weekly class readings and should take up no more than 15 min. Presentations are made during the second hour of the two-hour slots of the class.

The remaining **60%** of the class grade will be based on the preparation of **three short reaction papers** (3-4 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. In other words, for the first assignment (**due Feb 3!!!**) students can choose 3 readings to review from material listed starting from Week 1

through Week 6 (including). For the second assignment (**due March 17!!!!**) readings for review include those listed under Week 7 through 10. The third assignment (**due April 19 !!!**) incorporates readings from Week 11 through 15.

**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.

**Students with Disabilities:**

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

**Student Mental Health Services:** Room 245, Infirmary Bldg. Fletcher Drive, UF campus  
(352) 392-1171

### **Week 1 / Jan 6 – Introduction: Eastern Europe through a historical perspective**

See: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eastern\\_Europe](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eastern_Europe)

### **Week 2 / Jan 11, 13 – 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).

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>]

**Film: *Blind Chance*, dir. Krzysztof Kieslowski (1987) or *Dr. Strangelove*, dir. Stanley Kubrick**

### **Week 3 / Jan 18, 20 – What Was Socialism?: The Political Economy of Eastern Europe**

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

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

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.

### **Week 4 / Jan 25, 27 – Socialism's Collapse: Dreams of a Once and Future Nation**

Katherine Verdery. 1997. "A Transition from Socialism to Feudalism? Thoughts on the Postsocialist State" From: *What Was Socialism and What Comes Next?* Princeton: Princeton University Press. (Pp. 204–228).

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

### **Week 5 / Feb 1, 3 – Understanding the "Transition"**

#### **First paper due!!!!**

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

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

**Film: “The Life of Others”**

**Week 6 / Feb 8, 10 – New Objects and Subjects of Capitalism**

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

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 / Feb. 15, 17 – Surviving Transition and the Market**

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).

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

**Week 8 / Feb. 22, 24 – Nationalisms in the Wreckage (former Yugoslavia)**

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)

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

**Week 9 / March 1, 3 – An Economy of Shifting Identities**

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).

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](http://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 / March 15, 17 – Globalizing Intimacies**

#### **Second paper due!!!**

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

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)

#### **Film: Human Trafficking**

### **Week 11 / March 22, 24 – 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).

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).

True J, 2003. *Gender Globalization and Postsocialism*. Columbia University Press. Ch 3

### **Week 12 / March 29, 31 – Engendering Global Political Economy**

True J, 2003. *Gender Globalization and Postsocialism*. Columbia University Press. Ch 7

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)

### **Week 13 / April 5, 7 – 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 / April 12, 14 – The Value of Life in the Political Economy of Postsocialism**

Petryna Adriana. 2002. Chapter 1 and 6 From: *Life Exposed: Biological Citizens after Chernobyl*. Princeton University Press (Pp. 1-33; 149-190).

**Film: "Goodbye Lenin"**

**Week 15 / April 19 – Final remarks**

**Last 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>]