

University of Florida

ANT 3930 and EUS 3930: Anthropology of Eastern Europe and Postsocialism

Fall 2015

Instructor: Prof. Maria Stoilkova
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Meets: Tues: period 7 (1:55 pm – 2:45 pm) @ FLG 0245
Thurs: periods 7-8 (1:55 pm – 3:50 pm) @ FLG 0245

Office hours: Tue: 3 pm – 4 pm @ 3345 TUR
Wed: 1 pm – 3 pm @ 3345 TUR
Thu: 3 pm – 4 pm @ 3346 TUR

(or by appointment)

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 and something 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 capitalism, 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 and which 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 (multi-disciplinary) 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 postsocialist/transitioning states in Europe
- nuanced knowledge (historical and socio-political) of some particular countries in the region
- theoretical and ethical perspectives on social change, globalization, human rights concerns, social movements, and the ethics and analytics of everyday life

Course Format

The course will consist of lectures, discussions and in-class activities, including student presentations and screenings of films and documentaries. The instructor will deliver lectures geared toward providing (historically, politically, and theoretically) contextualizing information that supplements readings. The purpose of lectures will be to review the major conceptual points of each new topic and to integrate the material students are reading or viewing.

You are expected to attend each class and to have completed assigned readings – ahead of the meeting, 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 texts 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

If interested, general books on Eastern Europe:

Beck et al's *History of Eastern Europe*
Stephen White's *Communism and Its Collapse*

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). You may also choose to write a research paper on topic of your choice (60%).

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 (or group presentation)**, which fulfills 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.

In addition, you will be asked to team up with one other person and spend some time following the news from the region through Internet (to be explained during the first week of class). Countries you may choose to follow are the countries we are discussing with some

detail from readings and include Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovenia, and Ukraine. With a partner, select two of these countries and follow the news about them, present a brief report that compares what is going on in them or a historical context to supplement readings in class.

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.

Again alternatively students may also choose to work on a research project of their own. Please consult the topic with the instructor prior to the deadline for the first assignment, when you will have to submit a preliminary outline and a short bibliography.

First paper due: Oct 27
Second paper due: Dec 8

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

Getting help with writing

The UF *Writing Studio* is committed to helping University of Florida students and faculty meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers @ <http://writing.ufl.edu/programs/first-year-writing/>

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

Week 1 / Aug 25, 27 – Introduction: Eastern Europe through a historical perspective

Film: “Goodbye Lenin”

“Between global and local: a new dialectic of political expression for the twenty-first century”. Interview in *Open Democracy* by Kerem Oktem, Dimitar Keranov and Yavor Siderov, 22 July 2013 @ <https://www.opendemocracy.net/kerem-oktem-dimitar-kenarov-yavor-siderov/between-global-and-local-new-dialectic-of-political-expres>

Rupnik, Jacques “1968: The year of two springs” @ <http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2008-05-16-rupnik-en.html#.UhULKItXHiA.blogger>

Week 2 / Sep 1, 3 – Ordering the Post-WWII World

Ghodsee, K 2011. “*Lost in Transition*” pages 1-45.

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.

Tulbure N, 2009 “*Global Socialisms and Postsocialisms – Anthropology of East Europe Review*. 27(2): pages 1-9

Week 3 / Sep 8, 10 – What Was Socialism?

Yurchak, Alexei 2006. “Late Socialism” (chapter 1) in *Everything was forever, Until it Was No More*

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 4: Sep 15, 17 – Living 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 Etatization of Time in Ceasescu’s Romania”. From: *What Was Socialism and What Comes Next?* Princeton University Press. Pp. 39–58

Week 5 /Sep 22, 24 - Socialism's Collapse: Dreams of a Once and Future Nation

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

Ewa Charkiewicz, From communism to neoliberalism? Political technologies of 'transition' (on the web)

Kalb, D.P. 2010. 'My multiple, manifold, and endlessly contested 1989s. In: *Focaal - European. Journal of Anthropology*, 58, 109-112.

Week 6 / Oct 29, 1 – A "Transition" to What?

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

Krastev, Ivan. 2009 "The Greengrocer's Revenge". In: Prospect, Sep, <http://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/magazine/the-greengrocers-revenge/#.Ukr4PLzB01o>

Week 7 /Oct. 6, 8: Reforming within and without – politics of knowledge and reform

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

Dauphinne, Elizabeth 2003. "Faith, Hope, Neoliberalism: Mapping Economies of Violence on the Margins of Europe" In: *Dialectical Anthropology* 27: 189–203

Week 8 /Oct. 13, 15: New and Old Elites, Subjects and Objects of Capitalism

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)

Wedel Janine 2009. "Shadow Elites" p. 1-73

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

Week 9 / Oct. 20, 22: 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).

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

Oct. 27 - First paper due!!!

Week 10 / Oct. 27, 29 – Nationalisms in the Wreckage (former Yugoslavia)

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

Bechev D, 2006 Constructing South-East Europe

Gilbert, 2006 "The Part in Parenthesis" In: *Anthropology Today*, Vol 22 No 4

See documentary on *Turbofolk* at <https://vimeo.com/95907707>

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

Week 11 /Nov 3, 5 – An Economy of Material Life and Shifting Identities

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

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

Week 12 / Nov 10, 12 - 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,

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

Week 13 / Nov 17, 19 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 24, 26 – On Nostalgia and Populism

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

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

Dzenovska, Dace 2010. "Public Reason and the Limits of Liberal Anti-Racism in Latvia" In: *Ethnos*, vol. 75:4, dec. 2010 (pp. 496–525)

Week 15 / Dec 1, 3, 8 – Eastern Europe in the Orbit of Globalization and Development

Merje Kuus, 2004. "Europe's eastern expansion and the reinscription of otherness in East-Central Europe" In: *Progress in Human Geography* 28,4 (2004) pp. 472–489

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

Tlostanova, M. "Can the Post-Soviet Think? On Coloniality of Knowledge, External Imperial and Double Colonial Difference" In: *Intersections*. EEJSP 1(2): 38-58. @ <http://intersections.tk.mta.hu>

Dace Dzenovska, 2010. "Notes on Emptiness and the Importance of Maintaining Life" In *Anthropology of East Europe Review*

Dec. 8 Final paper due!!!!

Further readings:

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>]

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

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).

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)

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).

Web-based study pointers: studymode.com

Great new books on East Europe:

http://www.iupress.indiana.edu/index.php?cPath=1037_3130_3215

Films:

"Savior" Dir. Peter Antonijevic

"The Life of Others," Dir. Florian Henckel Von Donnersmarck

"Goodbye Lenin"