RUSSIAN 350
SOCIOL 221
ICS 270
VMS 318

Eastern Europe in Transition: Markets, Media & the Mafia

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Will Morgan (teaching assistant)

Spring 2014
Wednesday/Friday: 3:05-4:20 p.m.
White Lecture 107
In the aftermath of the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the collapse of the Soviet Union two years later, Russia, the other former Soviet republics, and the formerly-communist nations of Eastern Europe have sought to achieve fundamental political, economic, legal/constitutional, and social transformations. Some of the countries in this region have achieved great success in making the transition to more market-oriented economic systems and more democratic governance. Several of these former communist nations have joined the European Union and NATO. In other countries in this region, progress has been fitful and inconsistent; in a few countries violent conflicts have been fought; and in still other countries, little or no change has occurred. Two powerful countries in this region—Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union—have ceased to exist.

This course will examine the progress of the transformations underway in the 29 nations that make up this region. In so doing, we will analyze how these countries have responded to the challenges associated with fundamental change and the conditions that influence these outcomes. We will attempt to use the successes and failures in Eastern Europe to develop a broader theory of economic and political change in transitional societies.

I. TOPICS TO BE DISCUSSED

It would be impossible to discuss all of the issues that have arisen in the course of the transition of the Eastern European nations from communism to post-communism. We will only have time to discuss some of the most significant such issues. The themes to be discussed in this course include:

A. What, where, and who is Eastern Europe?

Any understanding of recent developments in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union requires some familiarity with the region's history. This segment of the course is intended to provide such an understanding by focusing on two aspects of the region’s historical legacies: the intersection of cultures in the region (Ottoman/Austro-Hungarian/Russian empires, Slavic/non-Slavic, Orthodox and Western Christianity/Islam, etc.) and the effects of decades of Soviet domination, with particular attention to the political and economic systems.

B. The Soviet economic model

Before current market reforms were initiated, before the collapse of communism, the nations of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union had a market economy—an underground market economy. To understand the operation of the post-Soviet market economies in this region, it is first necessary to understand how the old Soviet economy worked and how the huge underground economy that co-existed with it operated. This segment of the course will examine how the Soviet-era underground operated and how the legacy of the underground economy has affected the development of a legitimate market economy in the post-Soviet era.

C. Privatization and its aftermath

This segment of the course will review the process by which the formerly communist countries transferred ownership of their economies from the state into private hands, the problems and inequities in these processes, and ongoing controversies over allegations of “piratization.” In this connection, we will examine in detail how the so-called
“oligarchs”—the entrepreneurs who assembled massive economic empires out of the privatization process—have been treated by the current Russian government.

D.  Freedom of the press

What role has a new and free(er) media played in the political and economic life of the post-Soviet societies? We will examine the conflicts that have arisen in Russia and other Eastern European nations between the media (state- and privately-owned) and the political elite and how those conflicts have been resolved. We will also examine the manner in which the media is regulated in the post-Soviet states.

E.  Crime, corruption and the mafia

The media has been full of stories about the extent of organized criminal activities in this region. This segment of the course will be devoted to considering the reality of this situation—the extent to which organized crime occurs in the region, its effects on economic and political life, and its role in undermining reform initiatives. We will examine in detail the problem of human trafficking in Eastern Europe and the steps governments and international organizations have taken to combat it.

II.  META-THEMES OF THE COURSE

In all of the topics that we discuss in this course we will return time and again to several important themes. Among these meta-themes will be

- What is Eastern Europe? How (if at all) does Eastern Europe differ from Western Europe? What accounts for these differences?
- Why have some Eastern European countries been clear winners in the post-communist transformation and why have others been clear losers?
- What role does the specific culture and history of individual countries play in determining the success or failure of reform efforts?
- What have Western governments and international organizations done to aid in the reform process? Have these efforts fostered or hampered reform in these countries?
- What role does the prospect of membership in organizations such as the European Union and NATO play in shaping the reform process in these countries?

III.  GRADES:

Grades in this course will be calculated on the basis of several factors:

- Country report...........................................15%
- Map quiz ...............................................10%
- Midterm exam...........................................25%
- Final exam..............................................40%
• Class participation........................................10%

A. Country report

Each student (and in some cases teams of 2 students) will be assigned the name of one of the countries in the region at random and will be expected to deliver a 20 minute report on that country in class on the date specified in the class schedule below.

Each report should contain

• a brief overview of the relevant political, economic, demographic, and cultural facts pertaining to the country with a view toward the themes of this course,
• a discussion of what makes the country special,
• an analysis of success (or lack thereof) in reforming the government and economy. Has this country been a winner or a loser in the post-communist era?

Each student must submit a bibliography with their country report. The computer files for these reports will be posted on the course Blackboard site. The country reports will be graded using the A+, A, A-, B+, etc. letter scale.

B. Map quiz

In the map quiz (scheduled for January 29 during class) you will be expected to label the names of each of the 29 countries of our region as well as locate and name each of their capital cities on blank maps of the region. A copy of the blank maps I use for the map quiz as well as a list of the countries and their capitals are attached to the syllabus. The map quiz will be graded using a numerical 0-100 scale.

C. Midterm exam

The midterm exam will be an in-class exam (scheduled for March 7) consisting of a series of objective short answer questions. The questions will be drawn from the in-class discussions, the assigned readings, and the student country reports presented in class. The midterm exam will be given on March 15.

D. Final exam

The final exam will consist of a take-home exam consisting of several essay questions. The final exam will be posted to the course Blackboard site on Friday, April 27, and will be due on Monday, April 30. The final exam will be graded using the A+, A, A-, B+, etc. letter scale.

E. Class participation

Class participation will be evaluated primarily on the basis of attendance and participation/contributions to our class discussions. Attendance is mandatory and a sign-in sheet will be distributed and collected during each class. A student’s class participation grade will consist of the percentage of classes that they attended.
I reserve the right to adjust a student’s class participation grade upward to reflect consistent and thoughtful participation in our class discussions reflecting a familiarity with the relevant issues and readings and a capability to synthesize the two.

If you know that you will be unable to attend class, please notify me in advance.

**F. Final grade**

Final grades in this course will be computed according to the following scale.

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<th>Grade</th>
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<td>A+</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
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<td>B+</td>
<td>88-89</td>
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<td>D+</td>
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<td>F</td>
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In making these computations, grades that were originally awarded as letter grades will be converted into numerical grades based on the median of the numerical range for the letter grade in question (e.g., a grade of “A” will be calculated using the median of 93-97, which is 95).

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**IV. STUDENT CONDUCT**

The Duke Community Standard applies to this course and its various assignments.

**A. Duke Community Standard**

Duke University is a community dedicated to scholarship, leadership, and service and to the principles of honesty, fairness, respect, and accountability. Citizens of this community commit to reflect upon and uphold these principles in all academic and nonacademic endeavors, and to protect and promote a culture of integrity.

**B. Student Obligation to Act**

In accordance with the Duke Community Standard, students should act if they witness another student or professor partaking in unethical academic behavior. Appropriate responses include, but are not limited to: approaching the individual(s) observed, contacting the professor or teaching assistant about the event, and/or notifying other faculty. For more information, visit: http://studentaffairs.duke.edu/conduct/about-us/duke-community-standard

**To uphold the Duke Community Standard:**

- *I will not lie, cheat, or steal in my academic endeavors;*
- *I will conduct myself honorably in all my endeavors; and*
- *I will act if the Standard is compromised.*
C. Policies on Collaboration

1. Presentations:
Group presentations should be created with equal input from all members of the group; questions should be addressed to the professor or TAs and sources should be cited.

Group presentations should be completed by the group, but members can seek input from other groups or students in the class.

Individual presentations should be completed individually with sources cited; questions should be addressed to the professor or TAs.

2. Exams, tests, & finals:
Study groups are permitted.
Sharing study guides is permitted.
Sharing class notes is permitted.

If you are in any doubt about the application of the DSC to an assignment or what is/is not permitted, please consult me and the Duke Community Standard in Practice A Guide for Undergraduates, which is available online at http://registrar.duke.edu/university-bulletins/duke-community-standard-practice-guide-undergraduates.

V. COORDINATES:
My office is located in Room 303 of the Languages Building, which is next to Perkins Library on the West Campus main quadrangle. My telephone number is 660-3150 and my e-mail address is mnewcity@duke.edu. I do not have fixed office hours. I am in my office most days. If you would like to meet with me, either send me an email or contact me before/after class and we will set a mutually convenient time.

The teaching assistant for this course is Will Morgan. His email address is william.morgan@duke.edu; his office is located in 225 Academic Advising Center; and his telephone number is 684-9370.

VI. READINGS FOR THE COURSE
The required readings for this course will consist of articles, book chapters, etc. that will be posted on the course Sakai site. There are no required texts to be purchased.
VII. CLASS SCHEDULE, TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION, AND RELATED READINGS

Part 1—Introduction

Jan. 10 ..........Introduction to the course/Introduction to Eastern Europe

Jan. 15 ..........What is Eastern Europe/Who are the Eastern Europeans?

Geoffrey Swain and Nigel Swain, Eastern Europe Since 1945, pp. 1-6 (2009) [SWAIN & SWAIN]

J. Hagen, Redrawing the Imagined Map of Europe: The Rise and Fall of the “Center,” Political Geography, vol. 22 (2003), pp. 489-517 [HAGEN]

Jan. 17 ..........Historical overview of Eastern Europe

Leon Marc, What’s So Eastern About Eastern Europe? Twenty Years After the Fall of the Berlin Wall, pp. 41-49 (2010) [MARC]


Jan. 22 ..........The Soviet system


Jan. 24 ..........The post-communist reform agenda—dismantling the Soviet system


Jan. 29 ..........Map quiz

Video to be shown in class

MAP QUIZ IN CLASS

My Perestroika, directed by Robin Hessman (2010)
Part 2—Student country reports

Jan. 31 ..........East Germany
    Poland
    Hungary

Feb. 5 ..........Czech Republic
    Slovakia
    Slovenia

Feb. 7 ..........Romania
    Bulgaria
    Albania
    Gergana Noutcheva and Dimitar Bechev, *The Successful Laggards: Bulgaria and Romania’s Accession to the EU*, *East European Politics and Societies*, vol. 22 (№ 1, 2008), pp. 114-144 [NOUTCHEVA]

Feb. 12 ...........Macedonia
    Montenegro
    Croatia
    Stephan Renner and Florian Trauner, *Creeping EU Membership in Southeast Europe: The Dynamics of EU Rule Transfer to the Western Balkans*, *European Integration*, vol. 31 (№ 4, July 2009), pp. 449–465 [RENNER]

Feb. 14 ...........Serbia
    Bosnia & Herzegovina
    Kosovo
    Huma Haider, *(Re)Imagining Coexistence: Striving for Sustainable Return, Reintegration and Reconciliation in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, *The International Journal of Transitional Justice*, vol. 3 (2009), pp. 91–113 [HAIDER]
Feb. 19 ..........Estonia
              Latvia
              Lithuania

Feb. 21 ..........Belarus
              Ukraine
              Moldova
              Giselle Bosse and Elena Korosteleva-Polglase, *Changing Belarus? The Limits of EU Governance in Eastern Europe and the Promise of Partnership*, *Cooperation and Conflict*, vol. 44 (№ 2, 2009), pp. 143-165 [BOSSE]

Feb. 26 ..........Russia
              Georgia
              Armenia

Feb. 28 ..........Azerbaijan
              Kazakhstan
              Turkmenistan

March 5 ..........Kyrgyzstan
              Tajikistan
              Uzbekistan

March 7 ..........MIDTERM EXAM IN CLASS

SPRING RECESS
Part 3—Markets

March 19 ......Privatizing post-communist economies

March 21 ......Foreign investment

March 26 ......The war on the oligarchs; re-nationalizing the economy?

Part 4—Media

March 28 ......Media and political transformation in Eastern Europe
Ken Rogerson, *The Role of the Media in Transitions from Authoritarian Political Systems: Russia and Poland Since the Fall of Communism*, EAST EUROPEAN QUARTERLY, vol. 31 (№ 3, Fall 1997), pp. 329-353 [ROGERSON]

Colin Sparks, *Media systems in transition: Poland, Russia, China*, CHINESE JOURNAL OF COMMUNICATION, vol. 1 (№ 1, April 2008), pp. 7-24 [SPARKS]

April 2 ..........Freedom of the press in Eastern Europe


April 4 ..........Violence against journalists
Dunja Mijatović, *Protection of Journalists from Violence*, Council of Europe, Commissioner for Human Rights

Part 5—Mafia

April 9 .......... *Traditional Russian organized crime (vory v zakone)*


April 11 ........ Video to be shown in class

*The Mark of Cain*, produced and directed by Alix Lambert (2001)

April 16 ........ *Organized crime and economic development*

Irina Abramova, *The Funding of Traditional Organized Crime in Russia*, *Economic Affairs*, vol. 27 (№ 1, March 2007), pp. 18-21 [ABRAMOVA]

April 18 ........ *Corruption*

Mark Levin and Georgy Satarov, *Corruption and institutions in Russia*, *European Journal of Political Economy*, vol. 16 (№ 1, March 2000), pp. 113-132 [LEVIN]


Part 6—Western assistance

April 23 ........ *Did Western assistance help?*

VIII. EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES & THEIR CAPITALS
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