

Nationalism in East Central Europe 1900-2000

(History 312/ver. 4.1)

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M/W 11:00-12:00

or by appointment

Introduction

This course takes us through an in-depth investigation of nationalism in its East European context from the end of the 19th century to the present. During the semester we will consider developments in the history of this region and its peoples in a variety of spheres—political, international, cultural, and economic. Because our work will be regional in focus and because East Central Europe is a very diverse region, much of what we do will be focused on the big picture. Nationalism and its many and varied manifestations in the region will be the thread that helps us to bind this diverse region together.

One important aspect of this course is my expectation that you will collaborate with other students in the class—either during our discussions of various readings or issues, or via the class blog. The other important aspect of the course is that we will be spending a fair amount of time discussing various films that I will either be showing as part of a film series, or that you can watch on reserve. Because East Central Europe is a part of the world that is quite different, even from Western Europe, film helps us to gain insights into the lived experience of the peoples of the region.

Learning Goals

I hope that by the end of the semester you will have gained a more in-depth understanding of several topics of great importance for the history of East Central Europe: nationalism, how multi-national states work (or don't work), the importance of international meddling in the history of East Central Europe, and the intersection of culture and politics. Finally, I hope you will emerge from the course more adept at collaborative learning and at writing historically.

Assigned Materials

In addition to the books listed below, there will be several additional reading assignments (articles on reserve, websites, etc.). The books assigned for the course are all in the University Bookstore and all are available online at a discount over what the Bookstore charges (in most cases). You will need all of these books because we will be discussing them in detail in class at various points in the semester. If you plan to buy them during the semester instead of all at once, be advised that the Bookstore begins returning their inventory after the add/drop deadline. The books assigned are:

Jan Gross, *Neighbors*

Andres Janos, *East Central Europe in the Modern World*

Heda Kovaly, *Under a Cruel Star*

Tina Rosenberg, *The Haunted Land: Facing Europe's Ghosts After Communism*

Gale Stokes, *The Walls Came Tumbling Down: The Collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe*

Assignments

During the semester you will have three types of assignments. The first of these is to complete all of the readings assigned in the class schedule (see below) and to come to class prepared to discuss these readings. The second is to complete three papers – two brief analytical essays of between 3 and 5 pages, and one essay drawing on two of the films assigned. The third is to be an active participant in our class blog. I will provide tutoring and more detail on this expectation.

In addition to these assignments, there will be a mid-term examination (October 10) and a final examination (December 17 @ 7:30 am).

Grading

Your grade for the semester will be based upon the following criteria:

Class participation (on-line and in person)	25%
Midterm Examination	15%
Analytical Essays (combined)	30%
Film Essay	10%
Final Exam	20%

Writing Assignments

Analytical Essays: For the first essay you should discuss the problematic relationship between “nation building” and “state building” in East Central Europe from the late 19th century to 1939. This essay is due on October 3 via email. For the second essay, you may write on any topic that appeals to you. However, you must discuss your topic with me prior to commencing the writing process. I will not accept any essays that I have not approved. The second essay is due on the last day of class (December 5). Both essays should display a careful investigation of the scholarly literature on your topic.

Film Essay: The film essay is different from what you might be used to. I do not want a film review. Instead, I want you to select one moment in each of two different films that in some way extended or deepened your understanding of the history of East Central Europe as we have dealt with it in this course. Describe the two moments and then discuss how they (a) deepened your understanding, and (b) how they are related to one another. In short, this essay is as much about your learning as it is about the films or the history. The essay should be between 3 and 5 pages in length. The film essay is due the last day of class (December 5). I will also accept a short (i.e., under 5 minutes) film

instead of a standard essay. If you want to do the film instead of the essay, you must consult with me in advance.

Course Policies (please read them all)

Attendance: Because this course covers more than 100 years in just one semester, attendance is absolutely necessary if you want to keep up and grasp the essential points that I am making. A significant portion of your grade is predicated on your participation in the discussions that take place in class (or online) and so if you are not in class you cannot participate. As a result, if you fail to attend class, your participation grade will certainly suffer.

ADA: Any student who requires special arrangements in order to meet course requirements should contact me to make necessary accommodations (before October 1 please). Students should present appropriate verification from the Disability Resource Center.

Medical and Other Excuses: Every semester someone is forced to miss either an examination or the due date for an assignment either as the result of an illness or a family emergency. If you find yourself in this situation, fairness to all students in the class requires the proper documentation, without which your excuses will not be accepted. If you need to know more about this process consult me as soon as the emergency is taken care of. Because I cut people a lot of slack for real issues that come up, I'm much less forgiving about the other stuff. That means, for instance, that "I overslept," or "I couldn't find a parking space" are not good excuses.

Plagiarism and Cheating: In my courses all students are responsible for adhering to a certain standard of behavior when it comes to honesty and plagiarism. I expect each individual to adhere to these standards so that every member of the class knows that his or her work is being held to an equal standard. If one student cheats, all students in the class suffer. Even worse, however, is the fact that the student who cheats is hurting him or herself. When you are cheating, you are not learning and the reason you are here is to learn. In addition to my own high expectations when it comes to academic honesty, the University also expects students to demonstrate a high code of personal honor when it comes to academic work. Please read the George Mason University Honor Code if you have any questions about what is expected of you in this regard. Penalties for academic dishonesty are severe. If I have reason to believe you have cheated or plagiarized another person's work, I will discuss this matter with you. If I am not satisfied that no cheating or plagiarism has occurred, your case will be referred to the Honor Committee. If you have any questions about these policies, please come talk to me in my office.

Plagiarism and cheating are much easier in the digital age. It is an unfortunate fact that since I began teaching here in 2001 a number of my Mason students have felt free to follow those rules that suit them and ignore those that don't. I am a sophisticated user of Internet technology and if I have reason to believe that you have plagiarized your paper, I will pursue various strategies to either verify or discard my suspicions. If my suspicions seem to be true, I will meet with you first. If I am not satisfied with the results of our

conversation, I will refer the matter to the Honor Committee for adjudication. When I refer a case to the Honor Committee I *always* recommend failure for the course.

Food, Drink, Tobacco: In my classes drink is permitted, but food and tobacco products of all kinds are prohibited. If you must chew, whether food or tobacco, do it before you arrive or after you leave.

Reading Schedule

Note: I have listed readings by week rather than by day. This means I will expect you to have completed these readings by Monday so that you will be prepared to discuss them on any of the two days of that week. The general pattern I'm going to follow during the semester is lecture on Monday, discussion on Wednesday, but you should not count on that. All of the films are available either from me, the Library, or via the streaming service Mubi.com (for \$2.99 a film).

Week of August 27: Class introduction

Janos, 1-28

Ernest Gellner, "Nationalism and High Cultures"; Eric Hobsbawm, "The Nation as Invented Tradition"; Benedict Anderson, "Imagined Communities" (all on reserve under John Hutchinson, Nationalism). Read all three essays. You will be assigned one of these selections and expected to be able to discuss it in detail.

Week of September 3: The Nineteenth Century Background

[Monday – No class. Labor Day]

Janos, 29-99

Wednesday: Sites of Memory – see blog for assignments

Film options: *Colonel Redl* (A), *The Illusionist* (A)

Week of September 10: New States in East Central Europe (I)

Janos, 99-124

Wednesday: Discussion of primary sources (see blog)

Film options: *Closely Watched Trains* (CS)

Week of September 17: The Sharp Right Turn/War in East Central Europe

Janos, 125-217 (selections as assigned)

Wednesday: Discussion of primary sources (see blog)

Film options: *Divided We Fall* (CS), *Shop on Main Street* (CS), *Ashes and Diamonds* (P), *Želary* (CS), *Dark Blue World* (CS)

Week of September 24: Holocaust in East Central Europe

Jan Gross, *Neighbors* (entire book)

Wednesday: Discussion of *Neighbors* and articles on *Neighbors* (on reserve)

Film Options: *Divided We Fall* (CS), *Once We Were Neighbors* (H), and on World War II in Poland, *A Generation*, *Kanal*, and *Ashes and Diamonds*

Week of October 1

[No class. I am in Romania all week.]

Week of October 8: Communist Takeovers

Janos, 218-256

Monday: Discussion of Hedda Kovaly, *Under a Cruel Star*, and Wilma Iggers, “Milada Horáková” in *Women of Prague* (reserve) and other sources (see blog)

Wednesday: Midterm examination

Week of October 15: Stalinism

Wednesday: Discussion of David Crowley, “Warsaw’s Shops, Stalinism and the Thaw,” in Susan E. Reid and David Crowley, eds. *Style and Socialism. Modernity and Material Culture in Post-War Eastern Europe* and primary sources (see blog)

Film Options: *When Father Was Away on Business* (Y), *Underground* (Y), *Budapest Tales* (H), *Recsk 1950-1953* (H)

Week of October 22: Reform and Revolt 1956-1968

Janos, 257-328

Wednesday: Discussion of sources (see blog) and Mark Allen Svede, “All You Need is Lovebeads: Latvia’s Hippies Undress for Success,” in Susan E. Reid and David Crowley, eds. *Style and Socialism. Modernity and Material Culture in Post-War Eastern Europe*

Film Options: *The Promise* (G), *Man of Iron* (P), *Man of Marble* (P)

Week of October 29: The Decline of Socialism

Monday: Documentary Film - *Oratorio for Prague*

Wednesday: Discussion of sources (see blog)

Film Options: *Canary Season* (BG), *Slogans* (AL)

Week of November 15: The Death of Socialism

Janos, 329-405

Wednesday: Discussion of sources (see blog)

Film Options: *Kolya* (CS), *Goodbye Lenin* (G), *The Lives of Others* (G), *Man of Iron* (P), *Man of Marble* (P)

Week of November 12: 1989—The Year of Miracles

Wednesday: Discussion of Stokes, *Walls Came Tumbling Down* to page 167

Film Options: *Kolya* (CS), *Goodbye Lenin* (G), *The Lives of Others* (G)

Week of November 19: The World’s Worst Hangover 1990-2000

Janos, 407-418

Stokes, 168-217

Assignments from website: <http://chnm.gmu.edu/1989> (see blog)

Wednesday: Discussion of Stokes

Film Options: *Zahrada* (SL), *Fuse* (B), *Grbavica: Land of My Dreams* (B), *Pretty Village*, *Pretty Flame* (Y), *No Man’s Land* (S), *Before the Rain* (M); *Children Underground* (R), *White* (P), *I Love Budapest* (H), *School of the Senses* (H), *Casting* (S),

Goodbye Lenin (G), *The Wounds* (S), *Witnesses* (C), *Loving Glances* (S), *Tirana Year Zero* (AL), *Mirage* (M), *Something Like Happiness* (CZ), *Anatema* (AL), *Up and Down* (CZ), *Ryna* (R), *Human Heart Explodes* (M), *Czech Dream* (CZ)

Week of November 26

Rosenberg, *The Haunted Land*

Monday: Discussion of Rosenberg

Wednesday: No class. Thanksgiving Break.

Week of December 3: The World's Worst Hangover 1990-2000 (cont'd)

Stokes, 218-260

Film Options: *Zahrada* (SL), *Fuse* (B), *Grbavica: Land of My Dreams* (B), *Pretty Village*, *Pretty Flame* (Y), *No Man's Land* (S), *Before the Rain* (M); *Children Underground* (R), *White* (P), *I Love Budapest* (H), *School of the Senses* (H), *Casting* (S), *Goodbye Lenin* (G), *The Wounds* (S), *Witnesses* (C), *Loving Glances* (S), *Tirana Year Zero* (AL), *Mirage* (M), *Something Like Happiness* (CZ), *Anatema* (AL), *Up and Down* (CZ), *Ryna* (R), *Human Heart Explodes* (M), *Czech Dream* (CZ)

Film Key: (Origin and/or subject matter)

A=Austrian

AL=Albanian

B=Bosnian

BG=Bulgarian

C=Croatian

CS=Czech, Slovak, Czechoslovak

H=Hungary

M=Macedonian

P=Polish

R=Romanian

S=Serbian

SL=Slovak

US=American

Y=Yugoslavian (i.e., pre-1992)

Pronunciation Guide

You should try your best to pronounce all the names and local terms that come up during the semester. Here is a rough guide to the pronunciation of the letters/sounds that may be unfamiliar to you.

Albanian

ë	e, as in germ
ç	c, as in cello
dh	th, as in that
gj	dj, as in adjust
j	y, as in yes
nj	ny, as in canyon
rr	trilled as in Spanish
x	ts, as in cats
xh	dg, as in edge
zh	z, as in azure

Bulgarian/Macedonian

See: <http://www.omniglot.com/writing/bulgarian.htm>

Czech/Slovak/Slovenian

c	ts as in cats
č	ch, as in reach
cz	ch, as in chicken
d'	dj, as in bridge
ě	i+e, each vocalized
ň	n as in new
ou	long o, as in road
ř	r+z, each vocalized, but together
š	sh, as in she
ů	oo, as in zoo
ž	s, as in pleasure

German

ö	oe – a close equivalent in English is the u in shun
ü	ue – a close equivalent in English is ruin

Hungarian

c	ts, as in cats
cs	ch, as in change
é	ay, as in say
gy	dg, as in lodge
ö	u, as in curve
ó	o, as in joke
ő	oo, as in zoo

s	sh, as in she
ss	sh+sh, each vocalized (Tessék=tesh shayk)
sz	s, as in seven
ü, ũ	ew, as in few, the second longer than the first

Polish

c	ts, as in cats
ć	ch, as in change
ch	h, as in hard
cz	ch, as in church
dz	as in English, as in red zone
dzi	j, as in jeep
g	always hard, as in get
ł	w, as in won
ń	ni, as in onion
ó	oo, as in foot, not as in zoo
rz	hard zh, as with ż (see below)
sz	hard sh, as in shot
szch	both, as in frensh cheese
ś	sh, as in shoe
w	v, as in village
ź, ż	soft z, as in Zhivago—ż is harder

Serbian/Croatian

c	ts, as in cats
č	hard ch, as in church
ć	soft ch, as in cheese
dž	j, as in June
đ	dj, sort of like jam
j	y, as in yacht
lj	l, as in lure
nj	like the Spanish ñ
r	trilled as in Spanish
š	sh, as in sheep
ž	zh, as in measure

For the Serbian alphabet, see: <http://www.omniglot.com/writing/serbo-croat.htm>