

Societies and Cultures in Modern Europe – Fall 2011

ENG 494/598; SLC 494/498/598; REL 494/598; POS 494; GPH 494/598
Will attempt to regularize this course.

Professor Ileana Alexandra Orlich (orlich@asu.edu)

Office: Durham Building, School of International Letters and Cultures
Room 402 A; 965-4658

Office Hours: Tu, Wed, Th 3:00-6:00; and by appointment

Class time: T, Th 1:30-2:45

Course Description:

We will discuss issues relating to the three empires spread across Central and Eastern Europe, the Soviet and Communist Gulag, Stalinist tactics, the Fall of the Berlin Wall, the Prague Spring and the Velvet Revolution, the dramatic execution of the Ceausescus in Romania two centuries to the year after the French guillotined Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette and stormed into the Bastille, and the new, emerging democracies of a fragmented Central Eastern Europe.

Objectives:

1. This course will provide you with an interdisciplinary introduction to the culture of the countries of Central Eastern Europe from the time of the three empires of the region, Austro-Hungarian, Ottoman and Czarist Russia through WWII to the present. Drawing on the disciplines of contemporary history and politics, literature, the plastic and visual arts, anthropology, sociology, and economics, and using a variety of critical approaches – literary criticism and film studies, psychoanalysis, Marxism, phenomenology, feminism, and reader-response – we will explore various manifestations of culture in each of the countries of the Other Europe.
2. We will examine such issues as the politics and ideology that led to the fall of the regions' empires; the rise of nationalism; the triumph of the Bolshevik Revolution and the ensuing proletarian dictatorship; and the questions one feels compelled to ask in dealing with post-war totalitarianism and the emerging democracies of the newest members of the European Union.
3. We will turn to literature, philosophy, religion, sociology, cultural theory, linguistics, gender studies and other fields in the humanities to explore the issues of nations beyond borders; thinking beyond borders and addressing

global values; and European democracy and the notion of non-Europe, among many others.

Sample discussion issue: The writings of the existential phenomenologist Paul Ricoeur, who summarizes the reciprocity between freedom and necessity in what he calls “the paradox of the servile will,” seems to offer a better appreciation and understanding of the Soviet bloc, where servitude and the will seem to go hand in hand; this paradox has arguably had the greatest impact on the cultural milieu of the former Soviet region and/or modern totalitarianism and autocracy.

Grading:

30% each for Midterm and Final Examinations

10% for class participation

30% for research paper; no late paper will be accepted.

30% each for Midterm and Final Examinations; Midterm will cover the materials from the first day of classes to exam’s date; Final will cover materials from Midterm to end of the semester; both Midterm and Final will require in-class writing on Blue Books; both exams have similar format, which includes two parts:

- a first part that includes questions requiring as response short-paragraph answers
- a second part containing one or two essay questions

30% for research paper; no late paper will be accepted; due date is the first day of classes after Thanksgiving recess so that graded papers can be returned to you before the final examination; rewrite is recommended for a grade of C or below;

Undergraduate research paper guidelines:

- this paper of approximately 8 pages in length, should use a bibliography; use 12 point font and 1.5 spacing (see MLA or Chicago Manual for style); a draft/two page outline of the proposed topic and likely sources **due two weeks after Midterm** (sent to me electronically or handed in at the end of class).

Graduate research paper guidelines:

- 12 pages in length and all of the above; in addition, graduate students need to turn in a 1 page in length essay (a total of 2 essays) for each of the in-class movies (i.e., *East/West*, *The Unbearable Lightness of*

Being); these are due at the time of the next class meeting immediately following the film-showing class.

10% for class participation, which means active participation in all class discussions.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY, including plagiarism and inappropriate collaboration or cheating, is not tolerated!

In the Student Academic Integrity Policy manual, ASU defines Plagiarism [as] using another's words, ideas, materials or work without properly acknowledging and documenting the source. Students are responsible for knowing the rules governing the use of another's work or materials and for acknowledging and documenting the source appropriately. You can find this definition at:

http://www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/studentlife/judicial/academic_integrity.htm#definitions

There are severe sanctions for cheating, plagiarizing and any other form of dishonesty. Please see the Student Code of Conduct and Student Disciplinary Procedures. All work must be yours and it must be original to this class. If you have questions about this, please ask me.

Course Required Texts and Primary Readings

“...identity and culture can be accounted for only if the broader political context is taken into account. This does not simply mean that literature reflects the political climate, but that literature is an intersection of discourses latent in a given culture and made manifest by an individual author.”

Tomislav Z. Longinovic, *Borderline Culture*

“From a certain point in time that cannot subsequently be designated, one begins to regard oneself as historical: that is to say, embedded in, and tied to, time.”

Christa Wolf, 2003 *Tag 7*

Books are to be purchased at the ASU Bookstore; text manual is available at The Alternative Print & Copy, 1004 S. Mill Ave, Tempe, AZ, 85281 (480).829.7992 store.

Week 1, 2 & 3

Joseph Conrad. *Under Western Eyes* (Poland, tsarist Russia) (Bookstore)
Mikhail Bulgakov. *The Master and Margarita* (The Soviet Union/USSR)
Vlad Zografi. *Peter* (France, tsarist Russia) (Bookstore)
Cannibalism in Stalin's Russia and Mao's China (text manual)

Week 4 & 5

Czeslav Milosz. *The Captive Mind* (Poland, The Baltic States) (Bookstore)
Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. *The First Circle* (The Soviet Union/ USSR)
(Bookstore)
The Way Back (movie)

Week 6 & 7

Mikhail Sholokov. "The Fate of A Man" (USSR) (text manual)
Vera Inber. "Maya" (USSR) (text manual)
East and West (movie)

MIDTERM In-class examination. Bring blue books. No open books/notes.

Week 8

Bogumil Hrabal. *I Served the King of England* (Czechoslovakia) (Bookstore and movie)

Week 9 & 10

Istvan Orkeny. *The Toth Family* (Hungary) (text manual)
Eugène Ionesco. *The Lesson; The Rhinoceros* (post-WWII Europe) (text manual)

Week 11 & 12

Milan Kundera. *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* (Czechoslovakia) (Bookstore and Movie)
Four Months, Three Weeks and Two Days (Movie shown in class)
Balkan Plots (Yugoslavia, Bosnia) (Bookstore)

Week 13 & 14

Caryl Churchill. *The Mad Forest* (UK/Romania) (text manual)
Raccourci (Romania) (text manual)

Herta Mueller. *The Land of Green Plums* (Germany, Romania) (Bookstore)
Research Paper due.

FINAL EXAM: Scheduled in the Fall Listing of Classes
In-class examination. Bring blue books. No open books/notes.

Term Papers due Thursday after Thanksgiving Recess

Secondary Readings for Research Paper

Robert Cullen, *Twilight of Empire. Inside the Crumbling Soviet Bloc*

David Remnick, *Lenin's Tomb*

Giles Whittell, *Lambada Country. A Ride Across Eastern Europe*

Eva Hoffman, *Exit into History*

Georgina Harding, *In Another Europe*

Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality*. Volume II. New York:
Vintage Books, 1990.

---. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York: Vintage
Books, 1995.

---. "The Subject and Power". In Kate Nash (Ed.) *Readings in
Contemporary Political Sociology*. Oxford: Blackwell
Publishing, 2000.

Friedrich, Carl J. and Zbigniew K. Brzezinski. *Totalitarian Dictatorship
& Autocracy*. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers,
1966

Grieder, Peter. "In Defence of Totalitarianism Theory as a Tool of
Historical Scholarship." *Totalitarian Movements and Political
Religions* 8.3-4 (2007): 563-89