

HIST 4/576: Mod East Europe  
Fall 2009  
DEAN 203  
M-F 12:00-12:50

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Office Hours: M-F 10-11



### COURSE SYLLABUS

HIST 4/576 surveys the history of the "lands between" Central Europe and Russia from the middle of the eighteenth century to the present. Specifically, the course concerns the modern historical development of what are now Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Austria, Hungary, Romania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Yugoslavia (Serbia), Slovenia, Croatia, Bulgaria, and Albania. Despite the crucial significance of East Europe on the world scene--two world wars and a "cold war" began there, and recent wars in the Balkans were one of the gravest threats to European security in our time--the region's bewildering mélange of cultures and its constantly changing geography have isolated it from the serious historical attention it deserves. Squeezed dynamically--and often tragically--between great multinational empires, East Europe represents a fruitful confluence of some of the world's most powerful civilizations as well as rich and diverse national traditions of its own. This term, we will explore two main themes: first, how we might explain the distinctive and particularly virulent nationalism that emerged in East Europe, and the relationship of this development to the region's multiethnicity and imperial subjugation; and second, by what means we might assess East Europe's "backwardness" in relation to West Europe, such as the relative weakness of civil society, retarded industrial growth, and maintenance of feudal or totalitarian sociopolitical

systems. Finally, we might link the two themes to consider how it is that in East Europe the rights of the nation seem to outweigh the rights of the individual. What are the prospects for an economically, culturally, or even politically united Europe in our own times?

### COURSE OBJECTIVES:

After successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

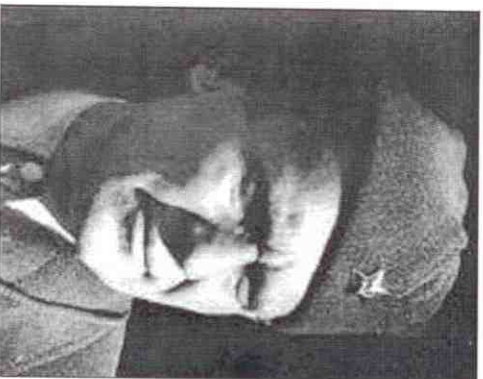
- Identify key political and physical features of East European geography on map quizzes
- Identify and describe the historical significance of key terms in East European history on exams
- Reconstruct patterns of historical continuity and change in East Europe in papers, presentations, and exams
- Prepare and present historical analysis orally (presentations, discussions) and in writing (papers and exams)
- Plan and write a seminar-length research paper based on a literary source, other primary evidence (HIST576) and secondary evidence
- Identify the relationship between historical fact and historical interpretations, on exams and papers
- Analyze cause and effect relationships, bearing in mind multiple causation, on exams and papers
- Bring sound and relevant historical analysis to the service of informed decision making, in discussion
- Research, organize, and present a research-in-progress lecture (HIST 576)

### REQUIRED TEXTS (available at CWU Bookstore and Jerroll's):

1. Robin Okey, *Eastern Europe: 1740-1985*
2. Peter Jones, *The 1848 Revolutions*
3. Slavenka Drakulic, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed*
4. Tina Rosenberg, *The Haunted Land*
5. Dennis Hupechick and Harold Cox, *The Palgrave Concise Historical Atlas of Eastern Europe*

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

**READING:** The study of history requires frequent and considerable reading. In addition to the assigned texts, you will be responsible for reading an East European novel (see "Novel Project Guidelines" below) and for consulting several secondary surveys in the library. In a ten-week course covering so diverse and vast an area as East Europe, it is crucial that you begin the reading early and stay on top of the assigned reading schedule. Given the complexity of the reading material, it is also important that you attend lectures and discussions regularly. Examinations will be drawn both from lectures and class reading.



**PRESENTATION:** The class will be divided into seven groups, each representing one of the nations or regions in East Europe (Poland, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, and Albania). Each group will prepare a presentation for the rest of the class on the history of the assigned nation/region, from 1750 to the present. Your geographical area of expertise will also determine the novel you choose.

*Presentation Guidelines:* The presentation should focus on one or

several key themes relevant to the region's history, and should tie in to our more general class themes, as expressed in lecture. DO NOT simply present a chronology. Your group must familiarize the rest of the class with what is distinctive about your region--the key events, conditions, culture, people, and/or trends within it. Each group must prepare to hand out to the rest of the class a short chronology of key events and dates in the history of your region. These may be as detailed as you like, but should be at least one typed page in length. At the end of the chronology, the group should write five identifications, drawn from the presentation and suitable for the midterm or final examination. All members of the group must participate equally to the presentation (though each member need not present; members may be researchers, visual designers, or presenters). Beyond these mandatory guidelines, the group may wish to use visual aids, such as Powerpoint, film clips, maps, and charts; or handouts, such as brief readings, vocabulary lists, or questions for discussion. It is up to you to make the presentation informative and interesting for the rest of the class. Presentation grades are generally assigned to the group as a whole.

**WRITING:** One of the main goals for the course is to help you plan and prepare a paper exploring the historical context and meaning of an East European novel. There will also be two in-class examinations combining short essays and identifications. Given the geographical complexity of the area we are studying, there will be one or more map quizzes during the term.

*Novel Project Guidelines:* Choose a novel from the list attached (or another approved novel) which falls within your region of expertise. Begin reading the novel immediately. Use your presentation research and lecture notes as contextual background as you read the novel. The purpose of the assignment is not to simply summarize the novel book-report-style, nor to interpret it in a literary sense, but to appreciate and analyze it as a source of historical data. There are three important ways of writing a historical paper based on a literary source, and you should make use of all three approaches. First, in what context was the novel written? Who is/was the author, and what do we know about the circumstances of his/her life? Does or

