

CITIES IN EASTERN EUROPE

After the end of Communism, many cities in Eastern Europe are undergoing rapid social and economic change, which has had major effects on the physical outlook of these cities. It also has affected the ways in which people, urbanites as well as non-urbanites, perceive these cities and urban life in general. This course wants to investigate how, in the post-socialist context, city dwellers perceive, define and use this rapidly transforming urban space, as well as how they try to shape and appropriate it (make their own "place" out of urban "space"). The course will also look at the ideological uses of the city, i.e. the ways in which peasants and other non-urbanites (but also urbanites themselves) perceive cities not only as "free" and anonymous places, offering a wide range of new economic possibilities, but also as sources of widely felt insecurity, danger and threat. In some parts of Eastern Europe, such fears have been reinforced by the lack of political control over processes of urban growth and development. Many changes seem to evolve without planning, which is in marked contrast with the socialist period. During the 1990s, existential fears under new political and economic conditions have fuelled anti-urbanist discourses, and boosted forms of populism and nationalism. This has been salient in the case of the former Yugoslavia: the urban-rural division has been important in understanding the violence of the 1990s, some local intellectuals going as far as to characterise the war as a form of "urbicide". The course would like to investigate the urban experience in the post-socialist period, and contrast it with the socialist period, i.e. focus on the ways people have lived their urban lives, how they have lived through the changes and how they perceive the differences between the socialist and post-socialist period. Other topics the course will deal with is urban landscape, monuments, urban material culture, urban design and architecture, property issues, social cleavages and ethnic divisions, consumerism, leisure and life style, urbanisation and (transnational) migration.

PRELIMINARY READING

- Low, Setha M. (ed.). 2002. *Theorizing the City. The new urban anthropology reader*. New Brunswick.
- Crowley, David and Susan Reid (eds.). 2002. *Socialist spaces: Sites of everyday life in the eastern bloc*. Oxford.
- F.E. Ian Hamilton, Kaliopa Dimitrovska Andrews, and Nataša Pichler-Milanović (eds.). *Transformations of cities in Central and Eastern Europe: Towards globalization*. Tokyo.
- Cor Wagenaar (ed.), *Happy cities and public happiness in post-war Europe*. Rotterdam.
- Åman, A. 1992. *Architecture and ideology in Eastern Europe during the Stalin era*. Boston.
- French, R. Anthony. 1995. *Plans, pragmatism and people. The legacy of Soviet planning for today's cities*. London.
- Tsenkova, Sasha and Zorica Nedović-Budić (eds.). 2006. *The urban mosaic of post-socialist Europe. Space, institutions and policy*. Heidelberg.



Title: Cities in Eastern Europe

Course Code: SEESGS37 (for SSEES postgraduates), SEESGS37B (for MSc Urban Studies students)

Course-unit value: 20 credits (8 ECTS)

Availability: Only taught during term 2

Open to: Postgraduate students (full-time, part-time, affiliates)

Course leader: Dr Ger Duijzings

Aims

- ANALYSE transformations cities in Eastern Europe have undergone in the post-Socialist period
- DESCRIBE the ways in which urbanites and non-urbanites perceive these changes and how they use urban space.

Objectives: By the end of the course, you will have acquired:

- DEMONSTRATE ability to critically assess academic texts
 - DEVELOP research strategies for the study of urban life in Eastern Europe
 - MAKE clear, engaging, and coherent oral and written presentations
 - FRAME their MA dissertations within concepts and theories elaborated in this course.
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Teaching & Learning Methods:

Number of Hours:

Seminars	20
Self Study	180

A list of readings accompanies each session. Students are required to read *all* texts, and give short presentations, normally every second week. Apart from the class reading and the oral presentations, students are expected to read a monograph and present it in class. ALL students are expected to participate in the discussion. The class teacher's role is that of chair and not lecturer. There is no language requirement.

WRITTEN WORK

Students are required to create one page documents for each individual reading they present in class, following the AQCI format (Argument, Question, Connections, and Implications).

They also submit one 800-word book review in week 6, and one 2.500-word essay in week 10, on a subject of their choice. The two essays are the main element in the coursework assessment.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment will be by 50% unseen examination and 50% coursework.

AFFILIATE STUDENTS: Second semester only.