

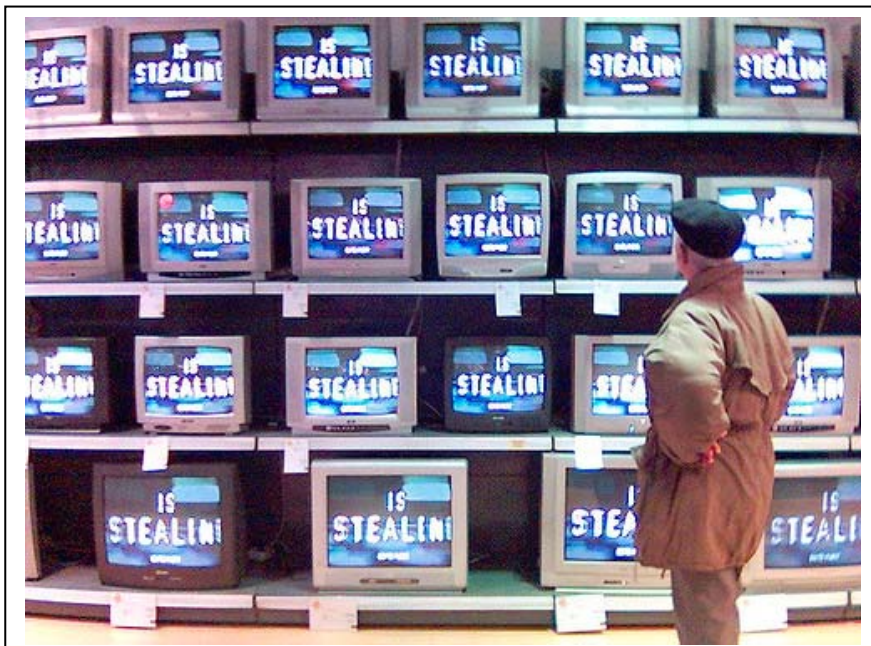
CULTURE IN EASTERN EUROPE: ANTHROPOLOGICAL APPROACHES

This course offers a general introduction to culture in Eastern Europe, applying the wider and more inclusive 'culture' concept common for anthropology, encompassing cultural norms and values, and patterns of human behaviour, thought and expression, which are shared by people as members of society. As there is much cultural diversity and variety in Eastern Europe, along and across ethnic and national lines of division, the course's primary aim is to familiarise first and second year BA students with the cultural complexities of the region, and make them aware of the cultural, linguistic, and religious map of the region, within a comparative and area-studies based framework. Because of its perspective 'from below', the course will focus on social realities and cultural traditions that are shaping the everyday lives of ordinary citizens in Eastern Europe, with special attention for classic anthropological issues like kinship and family life, material culture, and religious life and ritual, as well as topics such as the urban-rural divide, the clash between tradition and modernity, and consumerism in socialist and post-socialist Eastern Europe. Students will be made familiar with general anthropological concepts and will be introduced to the ethnography of the region.

The course will also pay much attention to the social construction and politics of cultural boundaries in Eastern Europe and Europe as a whole and link this to issues of inclusion and exclusion, particularly salient in the light of current EU enlargement, asking questions such as: what does the concept of 'Europe' mean and represent, who is seen to be part of it, or not, and why, and how is this concept of Europe being contested and negotiated. The course will also investigate the legacies of previous cultural and political divisions between Western and Eastern Europe, both in their pre-modern and modern variants, and look into the ways in which older cultural, religious and political divisions and sensitivities are revisited and questioned. In addition to lectures and class discussions, the course will make use of documentary and ethnographic films, in order to illustrate cultural aspects of everyday life in Eastern Europe.

PRELIMINARY READING

- Kottak, Conrad Phillip. 1996. *Mirror for Humanity. A Concise Introduction to Cultural Anthropology*. New York.
- Eriksen, Thomas Hylland - 1995. *Small places, large issues. An introduction to social and cultural anthropology*. London.
- Eriksen, Thomas Hylland and Finn Sivert Nielsen – 2001. *A History of anthropology*. London.
- Moore, Jerry D. - 1997. *Visions of culture. An introduction to anthropological theories and theorists*. Walnut Creek.
- Hann, C.M - 1995. *The skeleton at the feast. Contributions to East European anthropology*. Canterbury.



Title: Culture in Eastern Europe: Anthropological Approaches

Course Code: SEEE1005

Course-unit value: 0.5 cu

Availability: Normally taught during term 1

Open to: Undergraduate students from all SSEES and UCL departments (year 1 and 2), affiliates

Course leader: Dr Ger Duijzings

Aims

- FAMILIARISE students with the cultural map of Eastern Europe
- INTRODUCE students to anthropology and the anthropological approach to culture
- FOCUS on aspects of everyday life in Eastern Europe
- ANALYSE East European culture within a wider European context

Objectives: By the end of the course, you will be able to:

- UNDERSTAND the cultural complexity of Eastern Europe
 - APPLY anthropological concepts in the study of East European culture
 - ASSES academic texts critically
 - MAKE clear, engaging, and coherent oral and written presentations
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Teaching & Learning Methods:

Number of Hours:

Lecture and seminars

20

Self Study

130

Students are required read at least one item on the reading list every week, and also need to be prepared to talk about what they have read. They also write two essays of each 1500 words: the first essay, on an East European Capital of Culture, needs to be submitted after Reading Week; the second, on a topic of the student's own choice, by the end of term.

Assessment will be 50% by unseen examination and 50% coursework. The two essays are the main element in the coursework assessment.

Affiliate students who are here for the whole academic year will be assessed as per SSEES students. Affiliate students who are here for term 1 only, will do two essays of each 2.500 words (the first to be submitted after Reading Week, the second by the start of term 2).