

University of California, Irvine

Winter 2005

Wednesdays 2:00 – 4:50 p.m.

SSPB 4206

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POST-COMMUNIST SOCIETIES

(Sociology 249)

<http://eee.uci.edu/05w/69763/>

Description of the Course

Following the rise of capitalism in Europe and in North America, two worldwide transformations of great significance defined the twentieth century. The first was the rise of communism, not only as an ideology but also as an experimental social and political system covering nearly forty percent of the world's population. And the second was the ensuing reforms, which culminated in the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, marking the beginning of democratization and liberalization of formerly communist states. A large number of the world's countries have therefore experienced in the twentieth century first a transition to communism or socialism by revolution, and then a transition away from socialism by reform.

This graduate seminar has three components: first, a brief review of the communist system and why it failed; second, a study of the transition process in different socialist countries; and third, an examination of the economic, political and social consequences of the transitions. While the seminar will specifically cover countries such as China, the former Soviet Union, and Central and Eastern Europe, we will also assemble analytical tools to examine social change across time and space.

Seminar Organization and Requirements

The seminar will be organized around weekly themes and will rely on both lectures and more importantly, discussions by all participants. Everyone therefore is expected to read assigned readings and to engage in class discussions.

In addition, each student is required to 1) co-lead one class discussion, with pre-prepared questions and notes – questions need to be emailed to instructors 48 hours and to other students 24 hours in advance of class, and notes (2-3 pages) need to be turned in (20% of total course grade); 2) one oral report of a particular formerly socialist country's

experience in two transitions (20%); and 3) a research paper (40%) - students are asked to write a research paper that examines a common feature or features of the transition based on the experiences of more than one society. Class participation will make up the remaining 20% of the course grade.

Readings

Most readings will either be available online (marked with an “*”) or placed in a box for copying at SSPB 4218. There is one book ordered at the bookstore for purchase:

Polanyi, Karl .1944/1957/2001. *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Syllabus and Reading List

Week 1 January 5 **Introduction/Foundations of Communism**

Polanyi, Karl .1944/1957/2001. *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press. Foreword by Joseph Stiglitz and Introduction by Fred Block

Kornai, Janos. 1992. *The Socialist System: The Political Economy of Communism*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. Chapters 2, 3, and 4.

Week 2 January 12 **Foundations of Communism (continued)**

Kornai, Janos. 1992. *The Socialist System: The Political Economy of Communism*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. Chapter 5.

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. 1848. *The Communist Manifesto*.*

Szelenyi, Ivan. 1978. “Social Inequalities in State Socialist Redistributive Economies.” *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 19: 63-87.*

Week 3 January 19 **The Collapse of Communism**

Verdery, Katherine. 1996. *What was Socialism and What Comes Next?* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. Chapter 1, pp. 1-38.

Szelenyi, Ivan and Balazs Szelenyi. 1994. “Why Socialism Failed: Toward a Theory of System Breakdown – Causes of Disintegration of East European State Socialism.” *Theory and Society* 23 (2): 211-231.*

Bunce, Valerie 1999. *Subversive Institutions: Collapse of Socialism and the State*. Chapter 1, pp. 1-20.

Kaminski, Marek M. 1999. “How Communism Could Have Been Saved: Formal Analysis of Electoral Bargaining in Poland 1989.” *Public Choice* 98: 83-109.*

Week 4 January 26 **Routes of Post-Communist Transformation**

- Lipton, David, Jeffery Sachs, and Lawrence H. Summers. 1990. "Privatization in Eastern Europe: The Case of Poland." *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity*. 1990 (2): 293-341.*
- Verdery, Katherine. 2003. *The Vanishing Hectare*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. Introduction, pp. 1-31.

Student Presentations of country experiences

Week 5 February 2 **Post Communism: States and Markets**

- Polanyi, Karl .1944/1957/2001. *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press. Selections.
- King, Lawrence and Ivan Szelenyi. Forthcoming. "Post-communist Economies" In Handbook of Economic Sociology, edited by Neil Smelser and Richard Swedberg. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Bandelj, Nina. 2004. "Institutional Foundations of Economic Transformations in Central and Eastern Europe (1990-2000)." CSD Working Paper #04-14.*

Week 6 February 9 **Post Communism: Firms and Organizations**

- Stark, David. 1996 "Recombinant Property in East European Capitalism." *American Journal of Sociology* 101(4): 993-1027.*
- Hanley, Eric, Lawrence King and Janos Istvan Toth. 2002. "The State, International Agencies, and Property Transformation in Postcommunist Hungary." *American Journal of Sociology* 108(1): 129-161.
- Guthrie, Douglas. 1997. "Between Markets and Politics: Organizational Responses to Reform in China." *American Journal of Sociology* 102 (5): 1258-1304.*

First Student Progress Report on Research Paper

Week 7 February 16 **Post Communism: Democratization and Politics**

- Welsh, Helga A. 1994. "Political Transition Processes in Central and Eastern Europe." *Comparative Politics* 26 (4): 379-394.*
- McFaul, Michael. 2002. "The Fourth Wave of Democracy and Dictatorship, Noncooperative Transitions in the Postcommunist World." *World Politics* 54: 212-244.*
- Nathan, Andrew. 2003. "Authoritarian Resilience." *Journal of Democracy* 14 (1): 6-17.*
- Grzymała-Busse, Anna. 2003. "Redeeming the Past: Communist Successor Parties After 1989." Pp. 157-181 in Grzegorz Ekiert and Stephen E.

Hanson (eds.) *Capitalism and Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe*. Cambridge University Press.

Mason, David and James Kluegel. 2000. "Introduction: Public Opinion and Political Change in the Postcommunist States." Pp. 1- 25 in David S. Mason et al. (eds.) *Marketing Democracy: Changing Opinion about Inequality and Politics in East Central Europe*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Week 8 February 23 **Post Communism: Social Stratification**

- Nee, Victor. 1989. "A Theory of Market Transition: From Redistribution to Markets in State Socialism." *American Sociological Review* 54:663-81.*
- Rona-Tas, Akos. 1994. "The First Shall be Last? Entrepreneurship and Communist Cadres in the Transition from Socialism." *American Journal of Sociology* 100:40-69.*
- Gerber, Theodore P. and Michael Hout. 1998. "More Shock than Therapy: Market Transition, Employment, and Income in Russia, 1991-1995." *American Journal of Sociology* 104(1): 1-50.*

Second Student Report on Research Paper

Week 9 March 2 **Post Communism: Social Stratification** (continued)

- Zhou, Xueguang. 2000. "Economic Transformation and Income Inequality in Urban China: Evidence from Panel data." *American Journal of Sociology* 105(4): 1135-74.*
- Wang Feng and Tianfu Wang. 2003. "Bringing Categories Back in: Institutional Factors of Income Inequality in Urban China." CSD Working Paper #03-01.*
- Gerber, Theodore P. 2002. "Structural Change and Post-socialist Stratification: Labor Market Transitions in Contemporary Russia." *American Sociological Review* 67: 629-659.*
- Walder, Andrew. 2003. "Elite Opportunity in Transitional Economies." *American Sociological Review* 68: 899-916.*

Week 10 March 9 **Prospect**

- Walder, Andrew G. 1994. "The Decline of Communist Power: Elements of a Theory of Institutional Change." *Theory and Society* 23: 297-323.*
- Szelenyi, Ivan and Eric Kostello. 1996. "The Market Transition Debate: Toward a Synthesis?" *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 101: 1082-1096.*
- Campbell, John L. and Ove K. Pedersen. 1996. *Legacies of Change, Transformation of Postcommunist European Economies*. Aldine de Gruyter. Chapter 1 and 8, pp. 3-21 and 207-259.

Final Paper due Wednesday, March 23, 2005.