

Undergraduate Program in Central European Studies

CERGE-EI and the School of Humanities at Charles University



Address: Politických vězňů 7, 110 00 Praha 1
Tel. : +420 224 005 201, +420 224 005 133, Fax : +420 224 005 225
E-mail: upces@cerge-ei.cz
Web: <http://www.cerge-ei.cz/abroad>

MULTICULTURALISM, ETHNICITY AND COLLECTIVE MEMORY IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

Lecturer: Dr. Elena Soler

E-mail: alenasoler@terra.es

OUTLINE OF THE COURSE:

The course will offer a set of conceptual tools for understanding multiculturalism, ethnicity and collective memory in Central and Eastern Europe since 19th Century to the present. From an anthropological perspective and the analysis of some relevant ethnographic case studies, some of the questions that will be discussed in class are: What is the relationship between ethnicity and other types of identity? What is collective memory? How do ethnic groups remain distinctive under different social, economic and political conditions? What is multiculturalism and its relation to the process of globalization? In which ways can collective memory be important in the creation of ethnicity? Is nationalism always a form of ethnicity? Why people claim and express ethnic identity? What ethnic conflicts do we face in contemporary Central and Eastern Europe? What can be the roots of ethnic differentiations and therefore, potentially, ethnic conflicts: religious, political, economic, linguistic or “racial”? Memory, silences and forgettings, how we should deal with the past in order to advance with the project of Europe?

GRADING POLICY:

-Class preparation and participation: this must be the element most crucial to the student’s interest and therefore, the class’s success. Students need to read well the text assigned prior to each class. Students are expected to actively participate in all class discussions by volunteering comments, questions and answers. The goal of the course is to develop analytical and critical thinking skills that enable students to understand the texts and lectures and to engage in provoking discussion and written analysis .

-Grading: Throughout the course students will have a mid-term exam and a final research project. An electronic version of the project may be handed in the last day of the class (see course schedule for due date).

Participation/daily preparation: 30%

Mid term exam: 30%

Final reasearch paper:40%

REQUIRED READINGS:

-Thomas Hylland Eriksen. *Ethnicity and Nationalism. Anthropological Perspectives*. Pluto Press, London, 2002

- Georges Mink: “Between Reconciliation and the Reactivation of Past Conflicts in Europe: Rethinking Social Memory Paradigms in, *Sociologický Casopis /Czech Sociological Review* Vol 44 (2008):3

- Ethnographic case studies from the topics covered will be assigned each week in order to illustrate and bring discussion to the class (package of readings available for students in electronic version).

WEEK:**TOPICS:**

1. **Introduction to the course**
2. **The collective memory and the collective identity**
Case study: the uses and sites of memory among Hungarian minorities in southern Slovakia
3. **Ethnic groups and ethnicity: “us” and “them”**
Case study: the Turk population in contemporary Germany
4. **Ethnicity and nation. Nationalities as “imagined communities”?**
Case study: the Czech nation throughout history
5. **Nation-state**
Case study: the split of Czechoslovakia
6. **Collective memories & life stories**
Case study: life before and after communism in the Czech lands
7. **Mid-Term Exams**
8. **Ethnicity, history and culture**
Case study: the role of religion in the creation Polish national identity
9. **“Minorities” and the state**
Case study: the Jewish community in Poland in the XXth Century
10. **The paradox of multiculturalism and ethnic identity**
Case study: the “Roma” in Central and Eastern Europe
11. **Migration and ethnicity in a globalised world**
12. **Roots of ethnic conflict: from prejudice and discrimination to genocide**
Case study: the war in former Yugoslavia
13. **Memories, silences and forgettings**
14. **Final Research Projects and Oral Presentations**

RECOMMENDED READINGS:

- Anderson, B. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev.ed. London: Verso, 1991
- Barth, F. *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: the Social Organization of Cultural Difference*. London: Allyn and Unwin, 1969
- Climo, J and Catell, M (ed). *Social Memory and History. Anthropological Perspectives*. Altamira Press, CA, 2002
- Friedman, J. *Cultural identity and Global Process*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1994
- Gellner, E. *Nations and Nationalism*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983
- Halbwachs, M. *On Collective Memory*. Univ of Chicago Press, 1992
- Hann, C.M (ed). *Postsocialism. Ideals, Ideologies and Practices in Eurasia*. Routledge. London and New York, 2002
- Hobsbawm, E J. *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, 2 nd ed. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992
- Holy, L. *The Little Czech and the great Czech Nation. National Identity and the Post-Communist Transformation*. Cambridge University Press, 1999
- Nora, P *Les Lieux de memoire*. Vol I. Paris, Gallimard
- Verdery, K. *The political Lives of Dead Bodies. Reburial and Postsocialist Change*. Columbia University Press, NY, 1999