Post-communist democracies and Russia

Instructor: Ion Marandici

Course: Political Science 01:790:381, Fall 2014

Location: ARH-100 on Cook/Douglass

Time: MW 5:35-6:55 PM

Office hours: Monday 10 – 11.15 am, at the Center for European Studies (Douglass Campus), office 303.   
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**Course overview:**

This course will focus on a group of countries, which for the most part of the 20th century have been under the Communist rule. These countries can be further subdivided into four categories. After 1989, some of the former Communist countries initiated a successful double transition (both political and economic) that ended with their membership in the European Union (Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovenia, the three Baltic Republics). Some of the less successful countries from the region are E.U. candidates (Macedonia, Serbia, Montenegro), while others are potential candidates (Albania, Kosova,

Bosnia and Herzegovina). However, democracy and market economies did not emerge in all of the former communist countries. The second group of countries ended up developing hybrid political regimes with unclear prospects in terms of democracy and market reforms (Moldova, Ukraine, Russia). The third group of countries includes authoritarian states like Belarus, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. As it often happens, some of these countries sit on rich resource reserves coveted by more developed countries. Hence, we will explore whether there is a link between the richness in resources and the prospects for democratization. The fourth group of countries includes those states still nominally Communist.

China, Cuba, North Korea, Vietnam and Laos can be counted as the last bastions of Communism in the world. Although, we will deal mainly with transformations in Central and Eastern Europe and Russian politics, we will discuss the possible trajectories for the present Communist states. At the end of the class, the students should be equipped with concepts, information, and

analytical skills necessary to understand the regional developments.

The course consists of the following four broad sections: 1) the rise and fall of the Communist states and ideology, 2) theories about transitions to democracy, 3) transitions to a market economy and 4) Russian politics, foreign policy, and society. Additionally, we will have sessions on the politics of memory, nationalism and ethnic conflict, the E.U. accession of CEE states.

The ultimate question we will try to answer is why certain transitions failed, while others

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were successful. However, we will also address questions such as: why was it difficult to challenge the totalitarian Communist regimes? Why didn’t Russia democratize? What is Ukraine in turmoil and what is Russia’s role in it? Will the 2018 Russian presidential elections bring an end to Putin’s rule in Russia? Is it accurate to call Russia’s economic system - “state capitalism”?

**II. Course Requirements:**

a) Map quiz on **September 24** (10%).   
b) Midterm exam on **October 15** (30%).

c) Final paper. The paper should be written respecting the Rutgers rules of academic writing and

should be no more than 20 pages long (guidelines will be posted online); **due on December 16, noon**. Students should submit a brief outline of the final paper by **November 10.** The paper is worth 30% of your grade.

d) Two reaction essays due on **October 6** and **November 19** (20%).  
e) Group presentation on Russia (in December), regular attendance and involvement in class discussions (10%).  
  
**University policies**Disability Accommodation: Information on Rutgers Disability Support Services can be found at <http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/>

Rutgers Student Code of Conduct & Academic Integrity rules are enforced in this class. See details at <http://studentconduct.rutgers.edu>

Attendance: daily attendance is taken. If you are going to miss a class, please use the university reporting system available at <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/>. Absences for religious observance are excused without penalty and do not need to be reported, but you do need to notify me in advance. For medical problems please provide a doctor’s note. If you have more than three unexcused absences, points will be deducted from the final grade.

**III. Recommended books:**

\* Most of the readings will be on Sakai, but it is the student’s responsibility to print and read them.

Historical perspectives

Archie Brown, *The rise and fall of Communism*, New York: HarperCollins/Random House, 2009

Stephen Kotkin, *Uncivil society: 1989 and the implosion of the Communist establishment*, New

York: The Modern Library, 2009

Political Science Approaches

Valerie Bunce, Michael McFaul and Kathryn Stoner-Weiss (eds), *Democracy and*

*Authoritarianism in the post-Communist world*, Cambrdige University Press, 2010. Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*, Baltimore:

Johns Hopkins University, 1996.

Transition to capitalism

Anders Aslund, *How capitalism was built: the transformation of CEE, Russia and Central Asia*, Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Russian politics  
Joel Ostrow (ed.), *Politics in Russia: A Reader*, 2012.  
Masha Gessen, *The man without a face: the unlikely rise of Vladimir Putin*, Riverhead Books, New York, 2012.

**IV. Recommended journals:**

Demokratizatsya, The Journal of Democracy, East European Politics and Society, Post- Communist Studies, Europe-Asia Studies**.**

**V. Recommended sites covering post-Communist and Russian affairs:**

Radio Free Europe: [http://www.rferl.org/ ,](http://www.rferl.org/) Moscow Times (critical):

[http://www.themoscowtimes.com/index.php ,](http://www.themoscowtimes.com/index.php) Economist section Eastern Approaches:

[http://www.economist.com/blogs/easternapproaches ,](http://www.economist.com/blogs/easternapproaches) English version of [http://en.ria.ru/ ,](http://en.ria.ru/%20,) Russia

Today (pro-Kremlin): [http://rt.com/,](http://rt.com/) Levada Center for surveys on Russia:

[http://www.levada.ru](http://www.levada.ru/)

Blogs: [http://siberianlight.net/](http://siberianlight.net/%20,)  <http://robertamsterdam.com/>, <http://seansrussiablog.org/> , <http://www.opendemocracy.net/russia> , <http://rbth.ru/index.html> .

**VI. Think tanks**

Russian and Eurasian Security Network: [http://www.res.ethz.ch](http://www.res.ethz.ch/) Council of Foreign Relations (sections on Russia): [www.cfr.org](http://www.cfr.org/) European Council of Foreign Relations: <http://ecfr.eu/>

Carnegie Moscow Center: [www.carnegie.ru](http://www.carnegie.ru/)

**Course schedule:**

**Session 1: Introduction (September 3rd)**

No readings

**Session 2: The ideological underpinnings of the Communist regimes. (Sept 8)**

\* Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels: The Communist Manifesto:

<http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/pdf/Manifesto.pdf>

\* Archie Brown, Ch. 6: What do we mean by a Communist system?

**Session 3: The Red Army and the transition to Communism. (Sept 10)**

\* Archie Brown, Ch.2 – 4,

**Session 4: The Communist specter is haunting Europe and Asia. (Sept 15)**

\* Archie Brown, Ch. 9-11, Ch. 16.

**Session 5: Dissidents: courage and sacrifice. Hungary 1956, Czechoslovakia 1968, Poland**

**1980, China 1989. (Sept 17)**

\*Vaclav Havel, Stories and totalitarianism:

<http://vaclavhavel.cz/showtrans.php?cat=clanky&val=77_aj_clanky.html&typ=HTML>

\*Alexandr Solzhenitsyn, The Gulag Archipelago 1918-1956, Ch. 1-3, p. 3-143.

Vaclav Havel, Open Letter to the Secretary General of the Czech Communist Party:

<http://vaclavhavel.cz/showtrans.php?cat=clanky&val=71_aj_clanky.html&typ=HTML>

**Session 6: Movie or guest speaker (Sept 22)  
  
Session 7: Conceptualizing transitions to democracy I**. **MAP QUIZ !!! (Sept 24)**  
  
\* Stepan and Linz, Chapters 1-5.

**Session 8: Conceptualizing transitions to democracy II. (Sept 29)**

\* Samuel Huntington, *The Third Wave*, Ch. 1&2.

\* O’Donnell and Philippe C. Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative*

*Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies*, Ch. 2-6.

\* Lucan Way and Steven Levitsky, *Competitive authoritarianism: hybrid regimes after the Cold War*, Cambridge University Press, 2010, Ch. 2 (theory), Ch. 3 (theory applied to Eastern Europe) and Ch. 6 (theory applied to former Soviet Union).

**Session 9: 1989 - violent and peaceful transitions. (Oct 1)**

\* Stephen Kotkin, *Uncivil society: 1989 and the implosion of the Communist establishment*, New

York: The Modern Library, 2009. Chapters on East Germany and Romania.

\* Timothy Garton Ash, *The Magic Lantern*, pp. 47-61 (Budapest), pp. 61-78 (Berlin), pp. 78-131 (Prague).

\* Video: Timothy Garton Ash: <http://iis.berkeley.edu/speakers/elberg/tash>

**Session 10: Why did the kremlinologists fail? The collapse of the Soviet Union: structural,**

**actor-centered and cultural-ideatic explanations. (Oct 6)**

\* Stephen Kotkin, *Armageddon Averted: The Soviet Collapse 1970-2000*, Oxford University

Press, 2008, pp. 162-182.

\* Yegor Gaidar, *The Soviet Collapse: Grain and Oil*, American Enterprise Institute, 2007.

\* Mark Beissinger, *Nationalist Mobilization and the Collapse of the Soviet State* (Cambridge

University Press, 2002), pp. 443-459.

\* Archie Brown, What caused the Collapse of Communism? pp. 587-602.

\* Selected articles from The National Interest, No. 31, Spring 1993.

\* Interview with Lt. General Brent Scowcraft, “How the United States slept while the Soviet

Union crashed”, August 19, 2011 online at <http://en.rian.ru/analysis/20110819/165923872.html>  
  
**Reaction Essay 1 Due**

**Session 11: Review for the midterm exam!!! (Oct 8)  
  
  
Session 12: Midterm exam. (Oct 13)  
  
Session 13: Democratization and the European Union. (Oct 15)**

\* Michael Emerson, *Europeanization as a Gravity Model of Democratization*, Center for

European Policy Studies, November 2004.

\* Frank Schimmelfennig and Ulrich Sedelmeier, *The Europeanization of Central and Eastern*

*Europe*, Cornell University Press, 2005, Introduction and Ch. 1.

**Session 14. Escaping the valley of death: economic reforms and their consequences. (Oct 20)**  
\* Anders Aslund, Ch. 4 & Ch. 6.

\* David Stuckler, Lawrence King, and Martin McKee, (2009), “Mass Privatisation and the Post- Communist Mortality Crisis: A Cross-National Analysis," *The Lancet* 373 (9661): 399–407.

\* Vadim Volkov, *The Violent Entrepreneurs*, Ch. 1 and Ch. 2.

Joel Hellman, "Winners Take All: The Politics of Partial Reform in Postcommunist

Transitions" World Politics 50(1998): 203-234.

Keith Darden, “The Integrity of Corrupt States: Graft as an Informal State Institution,” *Politics and Society*, Volume 36, No. 1, March 2008, pp. 35-59.

Timothy Frye, “The Perils of Polarization: Economic Performance in the Postcommunist

World.” in *World Politics 54* (April 2002), pp. 308-337.

**Session 15: Nationalism and ethnic conflict. Civil society versus tribal society (Oct 22)**

\* Ghia Nodia, “Nationalism and Democracy” in Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner (eds),

*Nationalism, ethnic conflict, and democracy*, The Johns Hopkins University Press: Baltimore and

London, 1994.

\* Charles King, *Extreme Politics: Nationalism, Violence and the End of Eastern Europe*, 2010, Ch. 3 and Ch. 6.

\* Marc Howard, “The Weakness of Postcommunist Civil Society,” *Journal of Democracy* 13:1,

2002.

**Session 16: The politics of memory: WWII or the Great Patriotic War? Liberation or occupation? (Oct 27)**

\* Tony Judt, *The past is another country: myth and memory in postwar Europe*, Fall 1992.

\* Jan Kubik and Michael Bernhard, *A Theory of the Politics of Memory* (draft version), 2011.

\* Enn Soosar, *The bronze soldier and its deportation to a military cemetery*: [http://www.diplomaatia.ee/index.php?id=242&L=1&tx\_ttnews[tt\_news]=732&tx\_ttnews[backPi](http://www.diplomaatia.ee/index.php?id=242&L=1&tx_ttnews%5btt_news%5d=732&tx_ttnews%5bbackPid%5d=311&cHash=6ef9c5d374) [d]=311&cHash=6ef9c5d374](http://www.diplomaatia.ee/index.php?id=242&L=1&tx_ttnews%5btt_news%5d=732&tx_ttnews%5bbackPid%5d=311&cHash=6ef9c5d374)

\* Alexey Miller, Ivo Mijnssen, Galina Mikhaleva, *History Writing and National Myth-Making in*

*Russia*, Russian Analytical Deigest, Report 72 available at [http://www.res.ethz.ch .](http://www.res.ethz.ch/)

**Session 17: Communist countries today. (Oct 29)**

\* Archie Brown, *The Rise and Fall of Communism*, Ch. 30 (What’s left of Communism?) and

Ch. 18.

\* Joseph S. Nye Jr., "American and Chinese Power after the Financial Crisis." *Washington Quarterly* 33:4, October 2010, pp. 143-153 available at: <http://www.twq.com/10october/docs/10oct_Nye.pdf>

\* The West and China: <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,781597,00.html>

**Russian politics**

**Session 18: Presidential government: Putin forever? (Nov 3)**

\* Ten Myths about Russia: Understanding and Dealing with Russia’s Complexity and Ambiguity (Foglesong and Hahn, 2012)

\* Stephen White, *Understanding Russian Politics*, Cambridge University Press, 2011, Ch. 3.

**Session 19: Russian political elites and political parties. (Nov 5)**

\* Stephen White and Olga Kryshtanovskaya, *The Sovietization of the Russian Politics*, 2009.

\* Lucan Way, “Authoritarian State Building and the Sources of Regime Competitiveness in the

Fourth Wave. The Cases of Belarus, Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine” in *World Politics* 57:2,

2005, pp.231–261.

**Session 20: Russian oligarchs and the resource curse. (Nov 10)**

\* Anders Aslund, Ch. 10.

\* Pauline Jones Luong and Erika Weinthal, *Oil is not a curse: ownership structure and institutions in Soviet successor states*, Cambridge University Press, 2010, Ch. 10 (The Myth of the Resource Curse).

**Session 21: The Russian resistance to democratization. The colored revolutions: Rose, Orange, Tulip and Twitter revolutions. Euromaidan. (Nov 12)**

\* Michael McFaul, “Importing Revolution: Internal and External Factors in Ukraine’s 2004

Democratic Breakthrough”, pp. 189-219.

\* Corry Welt, “Georgia’s Rose Revolution: From regime weakness to regime collapse”, pp. 155-

188.

\* Scott Radnitz, “A horse of a different color: revolution and regression in Kyrgyzstan”, pp. 300-

324.

\* Ambrosio, Ch. 4 (p. 45-68), Ch. 5: Redefine

**Session 22: Putin doctrine: Cold War continued? Crimea’s annexation and the conflict in Eastern Ukraine 2014. (Nov 17)  
  
TBD**Stephen Blank, “America and the Russian-Georgian War” in the *Mediterranean Quarterly 20*

*(4)*, 2009.  
The Russian and Eurasian Security Network, Report on the Russian energy policy in *The*

*Russian analytical digest*, July 26, 2011.

**Session 23: The December 4th Duma elections and the 2012 presidential elections. (November 19)**

\* Paul Saunder, “Russia’s curious campaign” in *National Interest*:

<http://nationalinterest.org/commentary/russias-curious-campaign-5787?page=1>

\* Stephen White, “What kind of system?”, Ch. 8 from Understanding Russian Politics.  
 **Reaction Essay 2**

**Session 24**: GROUP PRESENTATIONS ON RUSSIAN POLITICAL PARTIES (Nov 24)

**Session 25: Movie 2 (December 1)**  
  
Session 26: **Twenty years after the end of the Cold War**. (December 3)

\*The Pew Poll, *Two decades after the Wall’s Fall*, November 2, 2009 available at <http://pewglobal.org/files/pdf/267.pdf>

Session 27 (December 8): Individual Consultations

FINAL PAPER DEADLINE: December 16