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# ANTHROPOLOGY OF EASTERN EUROPE

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## INTRODUCTION

### *Objectives*

This essay presents an overview of East Europeanist sociocultural anthropological research concentrating on the work of American anthropologists. Given the relatively late maturation of this field, most work has been published during the past decade. In recent years, the field has been marked by a great diversity in theoretical and methodological approaches.

This survey concentrates on research by Americans and, with few exceptions, materials published in English in Western journals are considered. The contributions of East European ethnologists have been crucial to defining the field, and the works of a few selected scholars form an integral part of this survey.

We define the region surveyed by this article as the Slavic states of Europe outside the U.S.S.R. and the geographically contiguous states of Albania, Hungary, and Romania, excluding East Germany for sociocultural historical reasons. National and even regional boundaries severely restrict work as they frequently tend to be self-conscious entities, often with strong feelings of ethnocentrism. Anthropological research, since it does tend to concentrate on locally defined cultural units, is particularly susceptible to these influences. Aspects of this situation are apparent in certain titles cited. For the most part,

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books and articles deal with individual states or ethnic groups and lack a comparative perspective.

This is only one of a number of difficulties facing the anthropology of Eastern Europe as it attempts to penetrate into a general anthropological consciousness (31, 32, 69). Though East European data is of great potential significance for anthropology, it has had a limited impact. Therefore, an additional objective of this essay is to develop an understanding of the dimensions of this problem and present some possible solutions.

### *Confronting East Europe's Marginality Within Sociocultural Anthropology*

Marginality develops from the status of both European and peasant studies within anthropology and, from a broader perspective of culture history, the position of Eastern Europe within Europe. Because of its cultural heritage, with a long-standing scholarly tradition, Eastern Europe has been of restricted interest to an anthropology focused on the "other," the non-European world (97, 98).

Though the anthropological literature on the region by Western scholars is significant, it remains relatively sparse when compared to areas of traditional anthropological interest as, for example, Africa and native North America. This situation presents both obstacles and opportunities for East Europeanist anthropologists. It forces researchers to justify their anthropological identity and the legitimacy of some of their research topics. Yet it affords the opportunity for anthropology to become that which it purports: a holistic approach to the human condition.

### *Marginality and Indigenous Research Traditions*

Eastern Europe has long been characterized by its own vigorous social scientific research traditions. This means that American anthropologists working in this region must come to terms not only with a new culture but also with a fully developed system of scholarly investigation. This scholarship is integrated with historically based national identities derived from the dominant peasant cultures (71, 100). The nature of these research traditions and their dominant ideas can differ greatly from Western anthropological thought and practice (17, 48).

As Hofer (97) suggests, in paraphrasing Wallace with analogs from agricultural techniques, the carefully plowed field of studies of European society is uninviting for the "slash-and-burn" oriented (American) anthropologist bent on the cultivation of the new and unexplored. In contrast, East European ethnography demands long-term, painstakingly detailed research to establish the specifics of the interrelationships of specific aspects of local life and national identity. The two approaches often find themselves on different paths.

### *Criteria of East European Unity*

Our definition of this area is based on its peasant nature, peripheral political-economic position to a series of empires, the conflicting ethnic diversity of its populations, and, since World War II, the commonality of its socialist institutions.

Unlike Western Europe with its well-developed urban tradition and Greece with its heritage of Classical civilization, the bases of East European national identities have resided historically with the rural folk. Its relatively small-scale urban centers were principally inhabited by cultural groups from outside the region until well into the nineteenth century. During the period between the two World Wars, politically organized Peasant Parties, based on articulated concepts of cultural heritage, were especially active throughout the region (17, 147).

The incorporation of the peasant societies of Eastern Europe as peripheries to imperial systems (Ottomans, Habsburgs, Russians, Western capital, Soviets) has encouraged a great degree of structural commonality and is reflected in recent research (23, 24, 30, 207–208a). This work has drawn on the earlier writings of both Western (212) and Eastern scholarship (198).

The region is also an ethnic shatter zone marked by a multiplicity of competing groups and overlapping population boundaries both in the past and continuing to the present. To a great extent, East European ethnicity is coterminous with religious identification since church organizations were the chief means by which national identities were maintained while the region was controlled by various imperial powers. The historical dynamics of this region form an analog in terms of cultural processes to Southeast Asia. The latter is also an ethnically diverse marginal area where the cultural traditions of the major world civilizations of India and China have interacted (55, 56).

Since World War II, socialist-communist states with centrally planned industrializing economies have characterized the region. Associated features of socialist political economy also encourage cultural commonality: collective farms, mass cultural institutions, and centralized political parties, among others. In the four decades since these governments have come to power, there have emerged great differences in the ways in which these socialist systems organize their populations and attempt to innovate change.

## HISTORICAL TRENDS IN ANTHROPOLOGICAL RESEARCH

### *Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries*

The roots of contemporary anthropological studies go back to the ethnographically oriented travel descriptions or occasional scholarly accounts which were published up to World War II. These accounts, which have some retrospective

value, present local cultures as colorful human scenery for the interest of Western readers. There were also books by Westernized politicians and intellectuals who presented their way of life to Western audiences. These people also tended to dwell on the exotic. Doreen Warriner's anthology (212) offers a useful compendium of these writings combined with socioeconomic analyses.

Indigenous research traditions developed early in the nineteenth century. Part of their motivation grew from emerging national consciousness. Resulting research institutions initially concentrated on collecting folklore and oral tradition.

The flowering of national peasant parties in the interwar period provided a base for the development of political economic research interests (17). There are also cases where the folkloric and economic overlap with Western anthropology as in the works of Josef Obrebski, Malinowski's student in London, who carried out field researches in Poland and Yugoslavia during the 1930s (147, 148).

### *The Formative Period of Western Anthropological Research*

Prior to World War II, there were a number of anthropologically oriented researchers who worked in Eastern Europe. Interestingly, Albania, which has been inaccessible for research since the war, was then one of the principal areas studied (33, 96).

The scholar who had the greatest institutional impact was the historian Philip Mosely, a colleague of Margaret Mead (142). He proved instrumental in the development of Soviet and East European area studies at American universities. After training with Malinowski, Mosely hiked through the Balkans, interviewing peasants on socioeconomic aspects of extended family organization, the *zadruga*, the joint family characteristic of the Balkans. His comparative research in Albania, Bulgaria, Romania, and Yugoslavia was facilitated by the relative openness of pre-World War II frontiers (21).

Mosely's work (21) is important for defining the cultural and ecological sources of regional variation in the *zadruga* throughout the Balkans. The volume of essays in his honor provides evidence of his scholarly collaboration. On his Balkan travels, he met the Romanians Gusti and Stahl and the Yugoslav Filipovic, whom he helped come to Harvard in 1952 (48, 198).

Parallel to Mosely's work was that of his contemporary Vera Erlich, who published a pre-war survey of Yugoslav family relationships in 1966 after studying at Berkeley (44).

At Columbia, Mosely collaborated with Margaret Mead and Ruth Benedict at the Institute of Contemporary Cultures, where Eastern Europe was a focus within the program. Benedict wrote a paper on Romanian national character (8). Related materials were published in Mead & Metraux's *The Study of Culture at a Distance* (7). This contribution calls attention to a related unifying

theme in East European societies, the impact of distant historical events on contemporary individual identity and behavior. This has also been stressed by Ehrlich (45). Another important work which grew out of the same auspices was Zbrowski and Herzog's treatment of the culture of the East European Jewish shtetl (221). During the same period, Geza Roheim also published on Hungarian values and religious ideology (161, 162) while Irwin Sanders pursued his village study in Bulgaria (176).

### *Research in the Postwar Period*

In the postwar period, the orientation of East European anthropological research has mirrored general trends in sociocultural anthropology. That is, its focus has gradually moved from a concern with cultural description for the purpose of defining national and ethnic traditions to one focusing on the explication of particular questions.

Still, many contemporary themes in East European research were first dealt with by interwar scholars: social structure of domestic groups (21, 48, 176), economic relationships of peasant society (17, 198), function and meanings inherent in religious ritual (9, 147), problems of innovation and migration (147). Today, however, a number of new research foci are apparent: analyzing the historic growth of regional capitalism and the structure, potentials, and problems of contemporary East European socialist societies. Present consciousness of political economy is linked to work associated with peasant parties in the interwar period. Yet the concern with socialism per se represents a significant departure.

## CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVES

### *Theoretical Orientations: Contrastive or Complementary?*

Since World War II, there have been two overlapping research orientations in the anthropology of the region. These approaches, which for purposes of discussion we distinguish as the "social structural" and "political economic," are (or ought to be) complementary. In many instances they deal with the same topical considerations and share a number of similar theoretical outlooks. We draw a distinction between them here, in part, for heuristic reasons but also because they illustrate some major tendencies in the analysis of Eastern Europe as well as force us to focus on key categories of the East European culture area.

Social structural research, as we define it, is more concerned with East European peasant society as reflected in community, family, related local institutions, symbols, oral traditions, and value systems. This approach emphasizes a notion of cyclical time with its emphasis on recurrent events. Certain aspects of the future then are anticipated only in terms of past developments. It

also recognizes the transformations taking place in Eastern Europe and therefore considers the related effects of industrialization, urbanization, and migration on peasant society. Attention is increasingly paid to new social groupings developing from this transformation, such as peasant workers and immigrant communities abroad.

Though modernization is recognized as a potent force of change, most social structural research emphasizes the continuity and adaptability of peasant institutions and values, even as they are encapsulated in the larger socialist political economy. The overriding stress is on the transitory nature of political systems compared to centuries-old cultural patterns. Social structural views more readily encourage us to look at the conditions of individual and community life to understand the historical cultural systems of Eastern Europe.

In contrast to this orientation, political economic research strategies have gained in popularity among American anthropologists over the past decade. They place greater emphasis on the interaction of local cultural units and national or supranational ones for understanding the formation of East European cultural systems. For example, greater weight is given to the influence of capitalist and socialist political economies. Production relations, economic exchange, and class systems are seen as more determinant with emphasis on change rather than continuity. This approach focuses on linear time: present developments can represent qualitative departures from previous patterns and so may not be readily predictable in terms of past events. Socialism and socialist institutions, especially planned social change, are considered to have an enduring effect on East European life.

Despite these differences, political economic research considers many of the same specific topics as the social structural approach. Their different emphases, rather than being diametrically opposed to each other, help unify the field. Combined, they can better address the question of continuity and change in East European cultural systems. *Bibliographic Surveys*

Contemporary work on Eastern Europe is informed by a series of literature reviews. The most comprehensive multidisciplinary coverage is found in Horecky (104, 105). The works of Sanders and his colleagues specifically concern social science research, but are limited to periodical articles (177, 178). Specifically anthropological are the surveys edited by Salzman (168) and Maday (136). Included are contributions on the individual countries. A more recent one limited to the Balkans for the 1970s is that of Halpern & Wagner (76). Individual country surveys include Howell (106), Maday (135, 137, 139), and Sozan (196) for Hungary; Kutrzeba-Pojnarowa (121) for Poland; Salzman (170, 171a) on Czechs and Slovaks in Romania, and Patterson (153) on Romania; Halpern (61) on Yugoslavia; and Wagner (210) on Serbia.

### *Community Studies*

The community study in Eastern Europe takes its impetus from Sander's interwar research, although the orientation was sociological because interaction between social groups was stressed rather than cultural institutions. The works of the Halperns on Serbia [Halpern and Kerewsky-Halpern (54, 59, 73, 112)], Winner (216) on Slovenia, Salzmann & Scheufler (172) on a Czech village, and, to a significant extent, Lockwood's monograph on Bosnia (127) fit this category as they attempt to delineate the culture of a particular people.

These works use history to explain cultural phenomena and exemplify regional patterns as manifested in specific communities. Each of these works, in somewhat different ways, attempts to articulate the complex net of relationships existing between community, region, and nation. The word attempts is used advisedly because it is not possible to accomplish this task easily. A useful critical article using a Balkan village and a Serbian village delineates some of the problems in community comparison (107).

By contrast, recent community monographs often focus more specifically on how village communities have been transformed by the advent of socialism, particularly via collectivization. Bell (6a) considers how collectivization transforms social hierarchy and individual perception. He contrasts the egalitarian principles of the collective farm with both the hierarchy necessitated by large-scale formal organization and the traditional forms of hierarchy. Hann (95) focuses on the social differentiation growing out of the economic alternatives now available in a formerly isolated tanya settlement. Salzmann & Scheufler (172), however, are more concerned with collectivization as a general vehicle for modernization. Each of these monographs is notable for contrasting the presocialist era with current socialist realities. This framework allows us to gauge more accurately the possibilities and processes of the linear socialist transformation and/or, conversely, the cyclical time dimension of peasant cultural continuity.

Lockwood's monograph (127) is also distinctive in its focus on peasant market relationships among multiethnic populations, taking as his point of departure a Moslem community. Migration, tourism, and associated socioeconomic changes in a community on the Dalmatian coast are dealt with in a monograph and related publications by B. C. Bennett (10–12).

Citing individual volumes does not, of course, exhaust the number of research projects, most of them doctoral dissertations, which have focused on individual rural communities. These investigations have been published as articles focusing on a variety of topics apart from community description (2, 4, 26, 103, 113, 146, 154, 155, 173, 193, 194).

Discussion of East European community studies is incomplete without mention of some significant works by East European scholars available in English translation. In particular, Fel & Hofer's "Proper Peasants: Traditional



Life in a Hungarian Village" (46; see also 47, 99) stands out as a milestone of "thick" cultural description.

### *Kinship and Social Structure*

Although the situation has changed during the last decade with increasing publication on Hungary, Poland, and especially Romania, the predominant role of Yugoslav based research is nowhere more apparent than in the study of family and kinship. Historically, the study of the *zadruga* has been a main focus of research. Some of the writings of East European ethnologists, notably Yugoslavs, have recently appeared in English. Prominent is an edited posthumous monograph on the work of the Serb Milenko Filipovic (48).

In addition to writing on the *zadruga*, he also dealt with various forms of lineage organization, symbolic adoption, marriage, divorce, and on property communal to social groups and functions of reciprocity. His objective was to explain in historical terms the social structures that he observed. In describing domestic units, he was particularly interested in nonkinship links and spatially separate residences. One of his most interesting articles deals with women as leaders of kin units (48). A general view of the extended family in Southeast Europe is given by his Croatian colleague Milovan Gavazzi (49). A parallel article by Gunda (52) deals with Hungary. These writings make no specific reference to any of the works enumerated below. Their value may be perceived from an emic perspective unlike the analytically etic articles of Hofer. A unique contribution combines the experience of growing up in a Hercegovinian upland community with the perspective of an American historian (209). Similar autobiographical data is found in Byrnes (21). Unique in its comparative approach to Balkan data is Stahl's article on the household domestic group (199).

Beginning in the 1960s, Hammel and his students Denich, Lockwood, and Simic have worked among Orthodox and Moslem populations in Yugoslavia (80, 81, 86, 88, 89, 92, 93; (40, 123, 124, 192). Taken together with the Halperns' work in Serbia, this has meant that other regions have been studied comparatively little.

Outside Serbia, Baric's writings on Catholic Croatia deal with instrumental uses of village kin ties in the process of modernizations (2, 3). Rheubottom's work on Orthodox Macedonia is concerned with ritual observances, dowry, and the *zadruga* as they relate to community-based social structures (158–160). Publications on Slovenia (143, 144, 216) emphasize the nuclear family, while Vincze (208b,c) deals with kin terminology among Magyar Romanians.

The sole monograph dealing with kinship is Hammel's (79), analyzing godparenthood as a component of a system of social exchange and detailing the functioning of South Slavic kinship systems, with discussions of household organization, marital patterns, and lineage groups.

Another aspect of Hammel's work is historical demography (85); he takes the social structural typology of the *zadruga* and transforms it into a methodological framework for understanding process in household cycles, using (Ottoman) census documents in place of field data. Writing on the same topic, Halpern (63), using historic (1863) records from the Serbian community he studied, makes the point that while the extended family was the ideal prototype, many individuals passed at least part of their lives in nuclear or small family households.

The appearance of these articles in a volume also dealing with Western Europe, North America, and Japan is significant in that the East European data is considered analytically in a worldwide comparative context. While the precise categories used in demographic analysis facilitate comparison, it is nevertheless important to stress that the publication of East European anthropological data has seldom been part of an explicit comparative framework, although there is a descriptive comparison for the Balkans (199).

Hammel and Halpern continue to publish results of their historical demographic work. Hammel uses a variety of Yugoslav census records, including medieval data (87, 89–91), while Halpern focuses on records from a Serbian village (65, 67, 70, 77). They have also published jointly, combining the results of field research and computer processing of nineteenth century archival data (72). They find that the *zadruga* represents a social unit which is flexible and adaptive, suited to rapid geographic expansion and exploitation of land resources but also to quick dispersal and reassembling under trying political situations. Some of these processes were explored previously by Hammel (80, 81, 93, 94). The methodological problems encountered in the use of oral and census data for reconstructing past social structures are set forth by Wagner (211), demonstrating that Serbian oral genealogies only recount males who left descendants, but not others present in archival census lists.

Both the *zadruga* and lineage are core social structures among the South Slavs. In a joint article, Hammel & Soc (92) develop the concept of lineage density based on demographic, economic, and cultural factors. Simic (182) discusses the role of blood feuds. In an analysis of lineage structure in Albania, Whitaker (213, 214) deals with kin units in prewar politics and the extended family within larger patrilineal units. Grossmith's research on contemporary ethnic Albanian rural households in Macedonia (50) describes units of approximately the same size as those recorded a century ago for Serbia but with a structure corresponding to a culture where fertility has remained high. Social conflict in an isolated Macedonia village, since abandoned, was dealt with by Balicki (1).

The greatest shift in social relationships has occurred as a result of the postwar processes of urbanization and industrialization. Hammel (83), using survey and interview data from modern Belgrade, shows interrelationships between

structural alignment of traditional Serbian kinship and the more individualized affective relationships between parents and children. Another monographic study (82) considers a number of variables influencing mobility within the cyclical nature of Yugoslav industrial growth.

The role of corporate kin groups in coping with modernization processes is examined in Simic's volume on Belgrade (184) and in a number of supporting articles (185–187). The relationships between networks of rural-urban kin-linked reciprocity is examined against the development of new urban social networks based on shared interests and experience. Simic's focus on problems of aging is unique, placing it in comparison with similar problems among South Slav migrants in the United States (188, 190).

Sex roles have been studied extensively for Yugoslavia. Hammel (78) points out that the romantic aspects of marriage have not been emphasized, and that spouses are not regarded as kin. Affinal ties in a Moslem setting are dealt with by Lockwood (126), with bride theft a flexible and manipulative mechanism for forming household alliances.

Denich (36, 37, 40) has been concerned with the general role of women in society and less with the specifics of family and kinship relations. She has focused on the ramifying consequences of the concentration of property, residence, and descent in the male line which minimizes the formal structural role of women. However, her research on migrants to an industrializing town in Serbia reveals that there is now an equivalence of parental aspirations for sons and daughters. This is radically different from the past where girls were enculturated in dependence on the economic base provided by male-dominated kin units. Through contemporary employment she sees women gaining an autonomy as individuals.

For Albania, Whitaker notes parallel perceptions about women (215). Doubtless there have been equally dramatic changes here too. These are found fragmentarily in travel accounts, but there are no postwar scholarly studies by Westerners.

A comparative study of changing marital relationships in five different cultural areas of Yugoslavia presents the results of survey research undertaken in the early 1960s. While all regions have changed, the agnatic ideology was still strongly apparent in the southern and eastern regions (74).

### *Oral Tradition, Ritual, and Symbolism*

Research on values and expressive behavior can be complimentary to socioeconomic studies, but these researches can also proceed on separate paths. Both the integration and separation can be seen in the two long-term studies of individual communities by Fels and Hofer in Hungary and Halpern and Kerewsky-Halpern in Serbia.

Much of the literature on these themes has appeared in journals within the last 5 years (19, 42, 108, 109, 111, 144, 166). It should be mentioned, however, that Hungarian scholars have considered related problems (51, 100). To date there are two monographs (117, 143). Kligman's study of the Romanian Whitsuntide ritual goes beyond the description of folklore performance in the context of contemporary secularization in a socialist state. She provides insights into ritual behavior and folk healing in a sociolinguistic framework in which silence and secrecy are potent communicators. In a symbolic analysis of a Macedonian winter solstice ritual, Sachs (166) considers how men are transformed into metaphoric women, reflecting honor/shame polarities. The prewar research of Obrebski (148) approaches sex roles in a Macedonian village in terms of secular and sacred performances.

Using psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic analyses, Kerewsky-Halpern & Foley (111) explicate oral charms in Serbian folk healing. A related article deals with lament as catharsis (109). For Macedonia, Rheubottom (158) writes of the household patron saint, emphasizing the symbols of openness, peace, and community.

Minnich (143, 144) considers the practice of pigsticking in Slovenia for defining local community and regional identity. In contrast to those who employ a political-economic approach, he refers only briefly to the local modern hog farm which provides employment for many villagers. He views identity as based in a peasant society which devolves on association with a way of life, grounded in the farmstead, subsistence farming, and the nuclear family. His analysis of ritual provides a link to the community study approach.

Both social structural and political economic approaches are reflected in the volume on Political Rituals and Symbolism in Socialist Eastern Europe. Included are contributions on all countries in the area except Albania and Hungary [Bulgaria (181), Czechoslovakia (164), Poland (22), Romania (116, 118), and Yugoslavia (43, 206)]. Each article discusses a particular ritual activity or symbolic domain illustrating how presocialist forms have been incorporated into socialist realities or how new, specifically socialist rituals are transformed by the unique cultural features of the communities in which they are practiced.

Oral performance is the theme in the work of Dubinkas (42) and Kerewsky-Halpern (108). The former is concerned with the dynamics of a contemporary folklore performance group, and the latter deals with male recollections of lineages as personal history and as epic (75, 108, 112).

A relatively neglected category is life history and personal narrative. Davis (34) provides a biography of a Slovene laborer, and Y. Lockwood (134) describes a dramatic death as seen through individual narratives. The autobiographical reflections of a young Serbian woman who left her village to seek education in town is given by Halpern (66).

Salzmann's monograph on value orientation among Czechs and Slovaks (167) draws on the work of the Kluckhohns and relates to contemporary studies of ethnicity and nationalism. Emic perspectives on the pan-Mediterranean themes of honor and shame, especially as they apply to male behavior, are considered by Boehm (19). A decade earlier, Simic (183) compared the value patterns of males in the southern regions of Yugoslavia with styles of behavior in Mexico. In both areas there is a shared concern with respect to the role of face presented to the outside world. His concern with this approach has continued (191). A 1978 article explored values in commercialized folk music (189).

An anticipatory integration of these diverse perspectives to provide a view of a civilization was attempted by the social historian Stoianovich (204). Many of his conceptions do not stand close anthropological scrutiny, but the idea of combining perspectives in an integrative approach remains attractive.

### *World Systems and the Region*

CLASS, ETHNICITY, AND EMPIRE The study of regional ethnicity has long been a prominent feature of anthropological investigation. Until recently such analyses have focused on the symbolic and behavioral content of ethnicity in order to understand the dimensions of particular identities and the processes of boundary maintenance (80, 124, 127–129, 131, 157, 169, 171, 180, 204, 213). These studies have helped explain the historical persistence and intense sentiment associated with East European ethnicity and how these markers of identification developed out of collective religious consciousness. However, content analysis of ethnic identity alone does not provide a total explanation of the intensity of regional interethnic relations.

Recent works consider ethnicity as the medium for structuring political and economic relations. Therefore, ethnicity is considered complementary to class-based action in the East European historical process (5, 6, 28, 163, 205, 207–208a). In this way, the content and symbols of ethnicity, which comprise the universe of previous analyses, now become the means by which conflict over key resources is carried out.

This conception views East European ethnicity as a variable phenomenon, waxing and waning in response to other stimuli. Ethnicity is only one component in the individual's identity; whether it is mobilized depends on its utility compared to other accessible identity components. For example, McArthur's work among Transylvanian Saxons (141) shows, among other things, how Saxon identity is often emphasized as a strategy for emigration, paralleling the stress on Turkish identity among Serbo-Croatian speaking Moslems in Macedonia (64). For multiethnic Yugoslavia, ethnicity is seen as the rationale for regional development (62) and a basis for political struggle (133). Reining (157) writes of the demise of the German minority in Hungary, while Salzmann (171) has studied a Czech village in Romania.

Ethnicity has predominated in the East European cultural landscape at the expense of other markers of identity. It remains a source of conflict because it is often a chief factor in unresolved territorial issues. These grew out of the dissolution of empires and the formation of nation states based on ethnic identities but with spatially mixed multiethnic populations (e.g. Transylvania, Macedonia, Kosmet). The intensity of ethnic sentiment in the region also carries over into scholarship. On occasion, ethnic partisans have taken others to task for failing to support the claims of their particular reference group (163, 195).

A chief concern of current research is to explicate the intensity and persistence of ethnic sentiments as compared to others such as class. World systems theory provides the intellectual framework by which a number of contemporary researchers have addressed these questions. The region's incorporation as the hinterland of contending empires is seen as a primary source of intense ethnic identity and its resulting intergroup conflict (130, 205). Ethnic identity is not so easily neutralized even under the onslaught of socialism's class-based policies.

**DEPENDENCY AND UNDERDEVELOPMENT** East Europe's experience as political-economic periphery not only promoted ethnic sentiment but, in corollary fashion, was also a chief factor in the region's underdevelopment. A number of works focus on the debilitating effects of the penetration of capital (23, 24, 119, 198, 212), while Verdery's recent volume (208a) is noteworthy for its linking ethnicity and underdevelopment in a "world systems" perspective. She shows how the differential integration of Transylvania into a shifting field of competing states and their dominant classes not only "underdeveloped" this multiethnic region but fostered particular kinds of interethnic relations and socioeconomic behaviors at the local and regional levels.

Chiro't's and Stahl's work, also on Romania, describes how economic dependency sets in motion a chain of events which transform relations among state, peasantry, and nobility. It emasculated the indigenous state and fostered a stratum of dependent nobility living off an impoverished peasantry. Communal lands, their basis of subsistence, were alienated from them in varying degrees, facilitating the differentiation of the peasantry into separate and competitive economic strata.

The effects of economic dependency are not consistent throughout the region but are modified by cultural circumstances. For example, Mouzelis (145) discusses variations in peasant political action in Greece and Bulgaria in the interwar period. Its relative absence in Greece is traced to earlier and more intensive urban development, the growth of an indigenous merchant class, and large-scale overseas migration.

The overwhelming agrarian nature of all the East European nations except for Czechoslovakia, their lack of significant urbanization and industrialization,

and the often impoverished circumstances of local peasantries formed the baseline for programs of centrally planned development begun after World War II (17, 27, 114, 115, 147, 154). The desire to overcome dependency-related structural problems thus contributed to the extraordinary comprehensive policies adopted by postwar socialist governments. Viewed from the perspective of the 1980s, the enormous external debt of many East European nations to Western banks is definitive evidence of the revival of economic dependency in the socialist epoch (146). As past dependency undermined the lives of East Europe's peoples, fostering rigid class structures, it threatens to do so today.

### *The Transformation of Peasant Society*

Research on socioeconomic change in Eastern Europe falls into two general categories: the integration of rural communities with regional and national processes, in part through the transformation of peasant agrarian systems, and the complex of behaviors associated with industrialization, urbanization, and related patterns of labor migration.

**PLANNED AGRARIAN CHANGE AND COLLECTIVIZATION** The nature of pre-war East European peasant society grew directly from its agrarian mode of livelihood. As agriculture was the principal defining characteristic of peasant life, its transformation, represented chiefly by collectivization and state-subsidized farms and cooperatives, has engendered considerable research.

Certain works see state-planned agrarian change as the vehicle for rural economic growth. Class structures have been transformed (95, 178a, 193, 194) and living conditions improved by the economies of scale and the freeing of labor that agrarian modernization introduces (151). Still, the verdict on socialist agrarian systems and their ability to transform rural life is a mixed one.

Greater research effort has been focused on the interrelationships of local communities with processes of socialist agrarian change. Hollos's analysis of two Hungarian collectives (103) attempts to explain variations in the economic performance and degree of local acceptance of these organizations largely by reference to management styles. Kideckel's work in a lowland Transylvanian community details how local class structure and land use patterns force change in the implementation of national collectivization policy (115). He also discusses how the persisting strength of local household organization and attitudes toward technology are manifested in collective farm production organization (113). Bell (6a), Salzmann & Scheufler (172), and Hann (95) also detail the influence of local social and ecological factors on collective farm organization.

Investigation of the agrarian transformation is also directed to understanding its mutually influential relationship with peasant families and local social networks in Hungary (103a), in Romania (4, 26, 29, 155, 200), and in Poland

(146, 154). This work considers the implications of changing agrarian practices on family structure and division of labor. Collectivization and other features of socialist modernization are seen to provide a range of economic opportunities, access to which is assured by the elaboration of suitable domestic strategies. Although family structures may remain the same throughout the socialist transformation, their functions change in accordance with the availability of resources.

Further work on the socialist agrarian transformation is necessary. None of the studies currently available is cross-culturally comparative, though Maday & Hollos (140) offer such a perspective within Hungary itself. Comparative research would be particularly fruitful for analyzing the sources of similarity and variation in East European socialism, especially since agriculture in Poland and Yugoslavia has remained largely private.

**INDUSTRIALIZATION, URBANIZATION AND THE PEASANT WORKER** As the agrarian transformation rationalized agricultural labor, workers were freed for participation in urban-industrial employment networks. Both ends of this process have been analyzed: changing occupational patterns and cultural styles in the rural communities (4, 60, 125), as well as rural migration to cities, urbanization, and the cultural circumstances of workers (34, 37, 39, 41, 58, 82, 84, 120, 120a, 138, 173–175, 184–187, 197). A related body of work specifically considers the migration patterns engendered by this transformation (12, 35, 64, 125).

Research on peasant workers is crucial for this region since the massive industrialization of the postwar period has made this a pervasive social category. Certain research centers on the behavioral variations between peasant workers and their more agriculturally oriented co-villagers (73). The consumption ethic of the peasant-worker is frequently noted (95), while Lockwood (125) points to the interesting anomaly that industrially oriented rural folk, generally the poorer segment of a village community, are often those with greater access to prestige goods.

Other researchers discuss the contradictory roles of the peasant-worker associated with their simultaneous participation in agrarian and industrial work. A chief drawback of this situation is that the excessive demands on such individuals may result in poor labor performance in both spheres of activity (57). Cole (29) stresses the benefits derived by industrializing states, such as those of Eastern Europe, when much of the industrial labor force continues to reside in rural areas and remains connected to the resources of an agrarian based network.

There is a reciprocal effect connected with these processes. Not only do urban influences change rural life, but peasant migrants have historically transformed urban life, resulting in the simultaneous urbanization of the village



and peasantization of the town (37, 58, 101, 120a, 122, 185). Subsequent research has also analyzed the strategies adopted by rural migrants in urban areas. Simic's monograph (184) is notable for its analysis of the adaptiveness of peasant behaviors and institutions to cities through rural-urban networks.

A subsequent and different approach to urbanization is Sampson's work on Romania, focusing on the specifically socialist nature of the urbanization process by examining it as an aspect of centralized planning. While Simic and others tend to emphasize continuity in urbanization, Sampson stresses contradictions. Examining both a village as it develops into a small regional town (173, 175) and a major urban industrial center (174), Sampson depicts the conflicting nature of urbanization growing from the often divergent needs and interests of state planners, long-term residents, and recent in-migrants. Spangler (197), in his review of the literature on Yugoslav urbanization, also finds the process more stressful than previous researchers. The writings in the recent volume compiled by the Winners (220) probe the historical dimensions of East European urbanization.

Despite the sizable research effort on peasant-workers and urbanization, there are no systematic discussions of socialist industry from an anthropological perspective. This is a significant gap given the growth of industrial enterprises in the area. There are, however, certain topics on which there is useful initial research. The role of education in socialist society is faced with dual expectations: to provide the model of collective behavior necessary for the creation of socially conscious individuals (102), and to serve as the vehicle for the homogenization of class structure. Thus far educational results are ambiguous. In Romania we see the persistence of differences in educational access for various population segments and a definite process of tracking, albeit into socialist institutions (156).

Another lack in area research concerns elites, leadership, and sources of political legitimacy. One work available is Denich's analysis of local leadership in the Yugoslav civil war and socialist revolution (38). Recognizing the inability of the peasantry to organize a revolution by themselves, she analyzes the characteristics of a revolutionary urban elite which enabled them to attract and keep a sizable peasant following.

### *East European Communities Abroad*

A recent focus in East Europeanist anthropology is on communities outside the region. As in cultural anthropology in general, this interest can be traced partially to the uncertainties of fieldwork abroad. This research does, however, provide an important comparative perspective on ethnic identities and their transformation in new cultural settings. Winner & Susel, in their edited volume (219), provide a variety of perspectives with a special focus on America. The

contribution by Kutrzeba-Pojnarowa considers the rural exodus from Poland, providing a newer perspective on the interwar situation analyzed by Obrebski (147).

Degh's view of a Hungarian-Canadian community finds regional identities derived from the Old World stronger than a common Hungarian identification. Schuchat (179) describes pressures for assimilation in an urban setting, while Patterson has written on Romanian communities in Canada (152), considering processes of adaptation over four generations. Studies of Slovene communities in Cleveland (217–219) conclude that future Slovene ethnic persistence in the United States will be in a progressively more truncated form. L. Bennett (13–16) focuses on the ritual associated with the feast day of the family's patron saint among Serbian Americans as a form of continuing ethnic identification supplemented by association with Orthodox church parishes. Halley (53) writes about her Croatian and Serbian maternal kin from the Chicago area and considers the similarities between Old and New world structures, and the survival of ethnic values in visibly assimilated individuals. Padgett (149, 150) researched the Serbian community of Milwaukee and found it culturally homogeneous yet factionalized and facing a future of reduced and more permeable group boundaries; she found that the core values are religious orthodoxy, kinship, and nationalism.

Kerewsky-Halpern (110) examines continuity and change in Bulgarian-American oral traditions, giving examples of new forms for older speech events. Halpern (68) writes about the changing forms of identification among Bulgarian-Americans and correlates these changes with cycles of ethnic community development. Stein is concerned with kinship, life cycle, and ritual among Slovak Americans (201–203). Bloch (18) ties the experience of two worlds together, considering the changes in the role of women as they move from a village in Poland to an American community. *The Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups* (1980), utilizing anthropological perspectives, contains articles on all of the East European ethnic groups.

Research on the East European Hasidic religious community, survivors of the Holocaust, is summarized in a bibliographical survey by Burack (20). In addition to citing studies using semiotic, symbolic, and structural analyses, she discusses the role of photography as a research tool. Despite anthropologists' interest in ethnic conflict, the Holocaust has not been a topic for anthropological research.

Writing about the geographically contiguous community of Burgenland Croats in Austria, Lockwood (132) finds an increasing ethnic assertiveness reinforced by a growing sense of identification with the Croats of Yugoslavia. At the same time, he finds that eventual assimilation may be inevitable, occurring at about the same rate among socialist workers and conservative peasants.

Unlike research on Eastern Europe proper, studies of its immigrant populations deemphasize the political aspects of ethnic identity, concentrating on processes of boundary maintenance, assimilation, variations in generational behavior, and the interpenetration of cultural systems. This seems a natural response to widely differing cultural conditions.

## ON THE RELEVANCE OF EAST EUROPEANIST ANTHROPOLOGY

In this review of the literature we have tried to comprehensively view the diverse interests of the increasingly numerous researchers in the field. We are encouraged by the expansion of interest in the region and the growing delineation of Eastern Europe as a legitimate category of anthropological inquiry. In addition, the quality of methods and the range of themes expressed in the literature are significant both for the understanding of East European cultural systems and for a general sociocultural anthropology.

Methodologically, the exchange of views with indigenous scholars (e.g. 25) and publication by East European scholars in Western journals (Bicanic, Filipovic, Gavazzi, Gunda, Hofer, Kutrzeba-Pojnarowa, Markus, and H. Stahl) tends to distinguish East Europeanist anthropology from studies of other culture areas where anthropology sets itself apart from those people studied. The existence of journals such as *Collegium Antropologicum*, published in English in Zagreb, while focusing on physical anthropology does contain articles of sociocultural interest. Some are collaborative between Eastern European and Western researchers (165).

Thematically, the transformation of East European society has provided a laboratory for the study of rapid and directed social change succeeding conditions of extreme underdevelopment. These circumstances are being duplicated in the developing world.

Despite the growing body of literature, we are nonetheless concerned about the limited impact of East European materials on general anthropology. This is not without reason. As stated earlier, the relative absence of regionally and cross-culturally comparative analyses is particularly inhibiting. The field also lacks general theoretical perspectives and integrative works.

While the political economic perspective has proved useful, local, regional, and national foci still dominate, as do the research agendas of particular scholars. One of us has been working in this field for over 30 years. During this time it has been possible to see a universe of cultural problems within the confines of a single village community (112). But the needs of the field of East European studies clearly are not identical with individual research priorities.

Groups of scholars share theoretical and methodological approaches. There are growing numbers of edited volumes of collections on particular topics,

including contributions by East European scholars, but articulated sets of questions for the region as a whole remain to be developed. If there is to be a viable East Europeanist anthropology, there needs to be integrating perspectives consistently addressed on multinational, regional, and cross-culturally comparative levels. Perhaps the pressure of regional identities is too strong for East Europeanist anthropologists who have gone native and become Balkanized in the process.

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