

**Professor: Serguei A. Oushakine**

**ECS 320**

## **THE HUMAN FACE OF SOCIALISM:**

### ***Everyday Life Under the Soviet Regime***

**(SA)**

**Seminar:** 1:30 pm - 2:50 pm T Th

Aaron Burr Hall 209

Traditionally, the life in the soviet period is perceived as being polarized between the ideological constraints imposed by the state authorities, on the one hand, and acts of popular resistance by dissidents, on the other. In this course, we will approach soviet life from a different point of view. By looking at everyday practices in socialist countries, we will try to understand how communist ideology was ‘translated’ into the language of material objects, spatial arrangements, and rituals of consumption. As in any act of translation, success of these everyday renditions of the dominant political and economic frameworks involved substitution and adaptation.



Ideological slogans and party directives were not just blindly followed; rather they were modified in accordance with people’s habits, life-styles, and expectations. What was lost in these interpretative acts of the “original message”? What was added to it? How was this “message” transformed, adopted and/or subverted? Through reading primary accounts, fiction, film, and academic studies of Soviet daily life we will analyze the cultural logic of socialism that still retains its legacy in a large part of the former Soviet world.

#### **Requirements:**

1. Class participation and weekly position papers – 30%
2. Midterm paper (Oct.27) – 30%
3. Final paper (Dean’s Day) – 40%

**Film Screening: TBA**

#### **Required books:**

**Susan Buck-Morss.** *Dreamworld and Catastrophe. The Passing of Mass Utopia in East and West.* Cambridge, 2000,

**Ruben Gallego.** *White on Black.* Trans. by Maria Schwartz. New York: Harcourt, Inc. 2006.

**Christina Kiaer.** *Imagine No Possession: The Socialist Objects of Russian Constructivism.* Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2005

September 11.

**Introduction**

**Joseph Brodsky.** Less than one. In: Joseph Brodsky. *Less Than One: Selected Essays*. New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1986. 3—34

September 16, 18.

**Week 1: MODERNISM, MODERNITY, AND THE MODERN WORLD**

**Henri Lefebvre.** Eleventh Prelude: What is Modernity? In: Henri Lefebvre. *Introduction to Modernity*. Trans. by John Moore. London: Verso, 1995, pp. 168-239 (notes 393-4)

**Marshall Berman.** Modernity—Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow; Petersburg: The Modernism of Underdevelopment. In: Marshall Berman. *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air: The Experience of Modernity*. New York: Simon and Shuster, 1982, pp. 15-36; pp. 173-248

**David Hoffmann.** Acculturating the Masses. In: David Hoffmann. *Stalinist Values: The Cultural Norms of Soviet Modernity (1917-1941)*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003, pp. 15-56 (195-202).

**Susan Buck-Morss.** “Common Sense.” In: Buck-Morss S. *Dreamworld and Catastrophe. The Passing of Mass Utopia in East and West*. Cambridge, 2000, pp. 98—133.

**Optional:**

**Charles Talyor.** Two Theories of Modernity.

In: *Public culture*, Vol.11, No 1. (1999), pp. 153-174.

September 23, 25.

**Week 2: IDENTITY, SUBJECTIVITY, AND SELF-MAKING**

**Charles Taylor.** Modernity and Identity.

In: *Schools of Thought: Twenty Five Years of Interpretative Social Science*, ed. by Joan Scott and Debra Keates. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001, pp. 139-153.

**Michel Foucault.** The Hermeneutic of the Subject.

In: Foucault, M. *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth*. Ed. By Paul Rabinow. New York: The New Press, pp. 92-106.

**Serguei Oushakine.** The Flexible and the Pliant: Disturbed Organisms of Soviet Modernity.

In: *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 19, No 3 (2004), pp. 392–428

**Jochen Hellbeck.** Fashioning the Stalinist Soul: The Diary of Stepan Podlybnui (1931–1939).

In: *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, Vol. 44 (1996), pp.344–373.

**Stepan Filippovich Podlubny.** Diary.

In: Veronique Garros, Natalia Korenevskaya, and Thomas Lahusen, eds. *Intimacy and Terror: Soviet Diaries of the 1930s*. New York: The New Press, 1995, pp. 291—332.

**Visuals: Attie, David.** *Russian Self-Portraits* (Photos). New York, 1977.

**Film: *Father*** (Apa, dir. [István Szabó](#). 1966).

**Optional reading:**

**Stuart Hall.** The Question of Cultural Identity.

In: Hall, Stuart, David Held, and Tony McGrew, eds. *Modernity and Its Future*. London: Polity Press, 1992, pp.274-289.

**Vadim Volkov.** The Concept of *Kulturnost'*: Notes on the Stalinist Civilizing Process.

In: Sheila Fitzpatrick ed., *Stalinism: New Directions*. New York : Routledge, 2000, pp.

September 30, October 2.

### Week 3: THE EVERYDAY: THEORY AND (SOME) PRACTICE

- Michel de Certeau.** General Introduction; Chapter I: A Common Place: Ordinary Language.  
**In:** de Certeau, M. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Trans. Steven Rendall. Berkeley: California University Press, 1984, pp. xi-xxiv; 1-14 (205-209).
- Nancy Ries.** Anthropology and the Everyday, From Comfort to Terror.  
**In:** *New Literary History*, Vol. 33 (2002), pp.725-742.
- Ferenc Fehér, Ágnes Heller, and György Márkus.** *Dictatorship over Needs*. New York, 1983. Part 2, pp. 221-301 (required); Part 1, pp. 1-137 (optional).
- Slavenka Draculić.** Make-Up and Other Crucial Questions; On Doing Laundry; Forward to the Past.  
**In:** Draculić, S. *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed*. New York: Norton and Co, 1991, pp. 21-32; 43-54; 66-75.

October 7, 9.

### Week 4: NO PLACE LIKE HOME

- Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and Eugene Rochberg-Halton.** The home as symbolic environment  
**In:** Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and Eugene Rochberg-Halton. *The Meaning of Things: Domestic Symbols and the Self*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981. pp. 121-145.
- Pierre Mayol.** The Neighbourhood; Propriety; Private Spaces.  
**In:** Michel de Certeau, Luce Giard, and Pierre Mayol. *The Practice of Everyday life. Vol.2: Living and Cooking*. Trans.by Timothy Tomasik. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998, pp. 7-34. 145-148.
- Victor Buchli.** Revolution and the Restructuring of the Material World; Soviet Hygiene and the Battle against Dirt and Petit-Bourgeois Consciousness.  
**In:** Buchli, V. *An Archeology of Socialism*. New York: Berg, 1999, pp. 23-62.
- Stephen Kotkin.** Living Space and the Stranger's Gaze.  
**In:** Kotkin S. *Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as a Civilization*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995, pp.157-197.
- Katerina Gerasimova.** Public Privacy in the Soviet Communal Apartment.  
**In:** David Crowley and Susan E. Reid eds. *Socialist Spaces: Sites of Everyday Life in the Eastern Bloc*. Oxford; New York : Berg, 2002, pp. 207-231.

#### **Optional:**

- Susan Reid.** The Meaning of Home: "The Only Bit of the World You Can Have to Yourself".  
**In:** Lewis Siegelbaum, ed. *Border of Socialism: Private Spheres of Soviet Russia*. Gordonsville: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006, p.145-170.

October 14, 16.

### Week 5: EMBODYING THE REGIME

- Pierre Bourdieu.** Bodily Knowledge.  
**In:** Pierre Bourdieu. *Pascalian Meditations*. Trans. by Richard Nice. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000. pp. 128-163.
- Frances Lee Bernstein.** Conserving Soviet Power: Thermodynamics and the Sins of Youth.  
**In:** F. L. Bernstein. *The Dictatorship of Sex: Lifestyle Advice for the Soviet Masses*. DeCalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2007. Pp.128—158 (214-217).
- Gail Kligman.** Bitter Memories: The Politics of Reproduction in Everyday Life.  
**In:** Gail Kligman. *The Politics of Duplicity: Controlling Reproduction in Ceausescu's Romania*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998, pp. 148-206 (305-314).
- Pat Simpson.** Parading Myths: Imaging New Soviet Woman on Fizkul'turnik's Day, July 1944.  
**In:** *Russian Review*, 2004. Volume 63 Issue 2, Pages 187 – 211.

**John G. Rodden.** Of Sport, State, and *Stasi*: Socialism with an Un-Beautiful Face.

In: *The Midwest Quarterly*, Vol. 40, 1999, pp.134-152.

**Film:** *White Palms* (Fehér tenyér, dir. [Szabolcs Hajdu](#), 2006)

**Optional:**

**Frances Lee Bernstein.** Disciplining the sex question in Revolutionary Russia.

**In:** F. L. Bernstein. *The Dictatorship of Sex: Lifestyle Advice for the Soviet Masses*. DeCalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2007. Pp.14-40 (197-201),

**Richard Guilianotti.** The Body: Discipline, Conduct and the Pleasure of Sport.

**In:** Richard Guilianotti. *Sport: A critical Sociology*. London: Polity, 2005. pp. 102-120. 222-223.

**Vladimir Kostka.** Sport Under Communism: Czechoslovakia.

**In:** James Riordan, ed. *Sport Under Communism: The USSR, Czechoslovakia, the GDR, China, Cuba*. Montreal: McGill University Press, 1978, 55-66.

**October 21, 23.**

**Week 6: TRAUMATIZED BODIES OF SOCIALISM.**

**Lylia Kaganovsky.** How the Soviet Man Was (Un)Made; What Does Woman Want? **In:** L. Kaganovsky.

*How the Soviet Man Was Unmade: Cultural Fantasies and Male Subjectivity Under Stalin.*

University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008. pp.19-41 (179-182); 119-153. (195-199)

**Ruben Gallego.** *White on Black*. Trans. by Maria Schwartz. New York: Harcourt, Inc. 2006.

**Film:** *Nine Days of the Same Year* (Deviat' dnei odnogo goda. Dir. Mikhail Romm, 1962).

**FALL RECESS**

**November 4, 6.**

**Week 7: OUTSIDEDNESS: PRIVATE LIFE IN PUBLIC**

**Mikhail Bakhtin.** The Spatial Form of the Hero. **In:** Mikhail Bakhtin. *Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity*. Trans. by V. Liapunov. Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1990, pp. 22-61.

**Susan Buck-Morss.** Dream and Awakening. **In:** Buck-Morss, *Dreamworld and Catastrophe...*, pp.174-213.

**Alexei Yurchak.** Living *Vne*: Deterritorialized Milieus. **In:** Yurchak, A. *Everything was Forever, Until It was no More: The Last Soviet Generation*. Princeton, 2006, 126-158.

**Polina Bren.** Weekend Getaways: The *Chata*, the *Tramp*, and the Politics of Private Life in post-1968 Czechoslovakia. **In:** David Crowley and Susan E. Reid, eds. *Socialist Spaces: Sites of Everyday Life in the Eastern Bloc*. New York: Berg, 2002, pp. 123-140.

**Visuals:** Miriam Morton. *Pleasures and Palaces: The After-school Activities of Russian Children*. New York: Atheneum, 1972.

**Film:** *Vertical* (Vertikal', dirs. Boris Durov, Stanislav Govorukhin, 1966)

**Optional:**

**Michel Foucault.** The Thought of the Outside. **In:** Foucault, M. *Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology*. Ed. By James D. Faubion. 1998, pp. 147-170.

**Steven Harris.** "I know All the Secrets of My Neighbors": The Quest for Privacy in the Era of the Separate Apartment. **In:** Lewis Siegelbaum, ed. *Border of Socialism: Private Spheres of Soviet Russia*. Gordonsville: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006, p. 171-189.

**Anna Rotkirch.** Journeys as Sexual Transgression; Working Poor: Social Marginality and Sexual Promiscuity. **In:** Rotkirch A. *The Man Question: Loves and Lives in Late 20<sup>th</sup> Century Russia*. Helsinki, 2000, pp. 178-191.

November 11, 13

**Week 8: COLLECTIVE JOYS**

**Mikhail Bakhtin.** Excerpt from Popular-Festive Forms and Images in Rabelais. **In:** Mikhail Bakhtin. *Rabelais and His World*. Trans. by Helene Iswolsky, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984, pp.244-277.

**Douglas E Foley.** The Great American Football Ritual: Reproducing Race, Class, and Gender Inequality. **In:** *Sociology of Sport Journal*; 1990, Vol. 7 Issue 2, p.111-135.

**Serhy Yekelchyk.** The leader, the victory, and the nation: Public celebrations in Soviet Ukraine under Stalin (Kiev, 1943-1953). **In:** *Jahrbucher fur Geschichte Osteuropas*, 2006. Vol. 54, Iss. 1. Pp 3-19.

**Karen Petrone.** Fir Trees and Carnivals: The Celebration of Soviet New Year's Day. **In:** Karen Petrone. *Life Has Become More Joyous, Comrades: Celebrations in the Time of Stalin*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000. pp. 85-112 (226-229).

**László Kürti.** Youth and Political Action: The Dance-House Movement and Transylvania. **In:** László Kürti. *The Remote Borderland: Transylvania in the Hungarian Imagination*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001, pp. 137-164

**Visuals: Boris Mikhailov.** Photographs from the series "Dance." **In:** Mikhailov B. *The Hassselblad Award 2000*. Goteborg, 2000.

**Film: Circus** (Tsirk, dir. Grigorii Aleksandrov, 1936).

**Optional reading:**

**Karen Petrone.** Anniversary of Turmoil: The Twentieth Anniversary of the October Revolution. **In:** Karen Petrone. *Life Has Become More Joyous, Comrades: Celebrations in the Time of Stalin*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000. pp. 149—174 (234-238).

**Craig Brandist.** Revolutionizing Social Life from a Base in Art: The Avant-garde and Mass Culture, 1917-28. **In:** Craig Brandist. *Carnival Culture and the Soviet Modernist Novel*. Oxford: Macmillan Press, 1996, pp. 52-81 (233-36),

November 18, 20.

**Week 9: THE WEST OF SOCIALISM**

**Mikhail Bakhtin.** The Spatial Whole of the Hero and His World in Verbal Art: The Theory of Horizon and Environment. **In:** Mikhail Bakhtin. *Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity*. Trans. by V. Liapunov. Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1990, 92—99.

**Vassily Aksyonov.** *In Search of Melancholy Baby: A Russian in America*. Trans. M. H. Heim and A. Bouis. New York: Vintage Books, 1987. 3-22

**Alexei Yurchak.** Imaginary West: The Elsewhere of Late Socialism. **In:** Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever...*, pp. 158—207.

**Mark Allen Svede.** All You Need Is Lovebeads: Latvia's Hippies Undress for Success. **In:** Susan Reid and David Crowley, eds. *Style and Socialism: Modernity and Material Culture in Post-War Eastern Europe*. New York: Berg, 2000, pp. 189-208.

**Ferenc Hammer.** A Gasoline Scented Sindbad: The Truck Driver as a Popular Hero in Socialist Hungary. **In:** *Cultural Studies*, 2002, 16 (1), 80–126.

**Optional**

**Georg Simmel.** Fashion. **In:** G. Simmel *On Individuality and Social Forms: Selected Writings*. Chicago, 1971. pp. 294–323.

**Mark Edele.** Strange Young Men in Stalin's Moscow: The Birth and Life of the *Stilyagi*, 1945-1953. **In:** *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, Vol. 50, No 1 (2002), pp. 37-61.

November 25 (Nov.27 – Thanksgiving)

## **Week 10: REGIMES OF CONSUMPTION**

**Arjun Appadurai.** Consumption, Duration, and History. **In:** Appadurai A. *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Minneapolis, 1996, pp. 66-88.

**Jonathan Zatin.** The Vehicle of Desire: The Trabant, the Wartburg, and the Discipline of Demand. **In:** Jonathan Zatin. *The Currency of Socialism: Money and Political Culture in East Germany*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, 203-243.

**David Crowley.** Warsaw's Shops, Stalinism, and the Thaw. **In:** Reid, S. and D. Crowley, ed. *Style and Socialism: Modernity and Material Culture in post-War Eastern Europe*. Oxford, 2000, pp. 25-48.

### **Optional:**

**Sándor Horváth.** Everyday Life in the First Hungarian Socialist City. **In:** *International Labor and Working-Class History*, Vol. 68 (Fall 2005), pp. 24–46.

**Vasilii Shukshin.** The Microscope. Pp. 13-23. **In:** Vasily Shukshin, *Roubles in Words, Kopecks in Figures, and Other Stories*. Marion Boyars Publishers: New York, 1994.

**Jonathan Zatin.** Consuming Ideology: The Intershops, Genex, and Retail Trade Under Honecker. **In:** Jonathan Zatin. *The Currency of Socialism: Money and Political Culture in East Germany*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, pp. 243—285.

**December 2, 4.**

## **Week 11 OBJECTS AND PEOPLE**

**Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and Eugene Rochberg-Halton.** What things are for; Object relations and the development of the self. **In:** Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and Eugene Rochberg-Halton. *The Meaning of Things: Domestic Symbols and the Self*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981. pp. 20-54; 90-120.

**Vera S. Dunham.** The Big Deal; Possessions. **In:** Vera S. Dunham. *In Stalin's Time: Middleclass Values in Soviet Fiction*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1990, pp. 3-23; 41-59. (256-259; 263-264)

**Christina Kiaer.** The Socialist Object; Everyday Objects; The Constructivist Flapper Dress. **In:** Christina Kiaer. *Imagine No Possession: The Socialist Objects of Russian Constructivism*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2005, pp. 1-40; 41-89; 89-142. (269-286)

**Márton Oblath.** A bespoke Chanel Suit in Hungary in 1966. **In:**  
<http://www.moneynations.ch/topics/border/text/chanel.htm>

**Visual:** GDR Fashion book.

**Film:** *Good bye, Lenin!* (Dir. [Wolfgang Becker](#), 2003)

### **Optional:**

**Djurdja Bartlett.** Let Them Wear Beige: The Petit-bourgeois World of Official Socialist Dress  
**In:** *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body & Culture*, Jun 2004, Vol. 8 Issue 2, p127-164.

**December 9, 11.**

## **Week 12: SOCIALISM WITH STYLE**

**Pierre Bourdieu.** Class Taste and Life-Style; Conclusion.

**In:** Bourdieu, *Distinction...*, pp.257 – 317; 466 – 485.

**Jukka Gronow.** *Caviar with Champaign. Common Luxury and the Ideals of the Good Life in Stalin's Russia*. Oxford, 2003, pp.17-118.

**Film:** *The Irony of Fate* (Ironia sud'by. Dir. El'dar Riazanov, 1975).