

## **2011 Summer School in Comparative Conflict Studies**

### **From the discourse of brotherhood and unity to the discourses of EU integration: the case of “transition” in Serbia**

**Dr. Jelisaveta Blagojević**

July 11-18, 2011

#### **Course Description:**

Since the time when Serbia was one of the six republics of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRJ), the country has been through very difficult cultural, political and ideological challenges and changes. While the dominant socialist ideology in former Yugoslavia, organized around Tito's idea of “brotherhood and unity”, helped to pacify and diminish differences between various ethnic and religious groups, Serbian society during the period of the Milošević regime has deployed different ideological patterns characterized by national pride, territorial integrity, and the policy of “all Serbs in one country” politics. These ideas were brought together under the banner of securing national and cultural identity, as well as territorial integrity.

In dominant political and ideological discourses, contemporary Serbian society is most often characterized as a society “in transition”, colloquially referred to as “Serbia after democratic changes”. In such discourses, everything in Serbia in the past 15 years is “in transition”: the justice system, the economy and culture, but also our lives, our freedoms and our rights. Our recent historical *trans* experience generally refers to the path from communism and socialism to capitalism and liberal democracy, recognized as synonymous with European Union (EU) integration. At the same time, while “transiting” from one ideology to another, Serbian society is carrying the heavy burden of recent historical events: wars, ethnic cleansing, isolation and the collapse of all institutions, among others.

#### **Course themes:**

The course will be organized around four concepts:

a) community; b) friend/enemy; c) minorities and d) popular culture.

The aim of this course is to understand the transition from the dominant Yugoslav ideology to what came after in Serbia through the analysis of changes in the discourses that organize the four concepts above. Discussion will focus on Serbia as well as on comparisons with the other successor states of the former Yugoslavia.

**- Course Outline by Day -**

**Tuesday July 12 (Day 1)**

**Morning class:**

10:00-12:30 Context: Balkans

- Movie - Whose Is This Song? (2003), Adela Peeva (70 min) and Discussion

**Recommended reading:**

- Slavoj Žižek, "Ethnic Dance Macabre", The Guardian Manchester (UK); Aug 28, 1992, (<http://criticaltheory-download-ebooks.blogspot.com/2011/02/ethnic-dance-macabre-by-slavoj-zizek.html>)
- Katerina Kolozova, "Zizek Imagining the Balkans," *Psychoanalysis, Society and Culture* (Palgrave McMillan), Autumn 2011 (forthcoming)

**Afternoon class:**

14:00-16:00 Background and introduction to the breakup of Yugoslavia

**Recommended reading:**

- Timeline: Break-up of Yugoslavia, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/europe/4997380.stm>
- Published: 2006/05/22 11:19:49 GMT, © BBC 2011.
- The Violent Breakup of Yugoslavia (Part 1,2) by James Graham, <http://www.historyorb.com/europe/yugoslavia.shtml>
- Dejan Jović, "The Disintegration of Yugoslavia – A Critical Review of Explanatory Approaches", *European Journal of Social Theory*, 4 (1): 101-120, Sage Publications, London, 2001.
- YUGOSLAVIA, 1991, by ALEKSANDAR HEMON, (New Yorker magazine, Issue of 2006-06-12, Posted 2006-06-05)

**Wednesday July 13 (Day 2)**

**Morning class:**

10:00-12:30 Who is the friend?

- Inserts from the partisan movies: *The Battle of Sutjeska* (1973), *Guns of War* (1974) and Discussion.

**Recommended reading:**

- Jacques Derrida, “On Absolute Hostility: The Cause of the Philosophy and the Specter of the Political” in *The Politics of Friendship*, Verso, London, New York, 2005, p. 112-138.
- Boyan Manchev, “Violence and Political Representation. The Post-communist Case”, ([http://liternet.bg/publish2/bmanchev/violence\\_en.htm](http://liternet.bg/publish2/bmanchev/violence_en.htm))

**Afternoon class:**

14:00-16:00 Who is the enemy?

- Movie: *Pretty Village, Pretty Flame* (1996) Srdjan Dragojevic and Discussion

**Recommended reading:**

- Pavle Levi, “Of Ethnic Enemy as *Acousmetre*” in *Aesthetics and Ideology in post Yugoslav Cinema*, Stanford, California, Stanford University Press, 2007.

**Thursday July 14 (Day 3)**

**Morning class:**

10:00-12:30   Transiting Discourses: Community as Brotherhood and Unity vs Community as Trans/National Identity

**Recommended reading:**

- Jean Luc Nancy, “Eulogy for the Mêlée” in *Being Singular Plural*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 2000, p. 145-159.
- Boris Buden, “The post-Yugoslavian Condition of Institutional Critique: An Introduction On Critique as Countercultural Translation”, 2007, (<http://eipcp.net/transversal/0208/buden/en>)
- Jasmina Husanovic ,“In Search of Agency ” Beyond the “Old/New” Biopolitics of Sovereignty in Bosnia”, in *Sovereign Lives: Power in Global politics*, eds. Jenny Edkins with Michael Shapiro and Veronique Pin-Fat, Routledge, New York, 2004.

**Afternoon class:**

14:00-16:00

- Movie: *Walter Defends Sarajevo* (1972)
- Discussion.

## Friday July 15 (Day 4)

### Morning class:

10:00-12:30 First, second and ... the other Serbia

### **Recommended reading:**

- Boris Buden, "Children of postcommunism", *Radical Philosophy*, ([http://www.radicalphilosophy.com/default.asp?channel\\_id=2369&editorial\\_id=28990](http://www.radicalphilosophy.com/default.asp?channel_id=2369&editorial_id=28990))

### **Additional reading:**

- Iva Pauker, "Reconciliation and Popular Culture: A Promising Development In Former Yugoslavia?" in *Pathways to Reconciliation and Global Human Rights* Conference, Globalism Institute, RMIT, Sarajevo, 2005.
- Dubravka Ugrešić, "European Literature as a Eurovision Song Contest" in *Writing Europe, What is European about the literatures of Europe*" eds. Ursula Keller and Ilma Rakusa, CEU Press, Budapest&New York, 2004.

### Afternoon class:

14:00-16:00

- Movie: *Heated Blood*, 2008
- Discussion.

### **Additional Reading:**

- Jelisaveta Blagojević, "Between Walls. Provincialisms, human rights, sexualities and Serbian public discourses on EU integration" u *De-Centring Western Sexualities: Central and Eastern European Perspectives*, eds. Robert Kulpa and Joanna Mizielińska, Ashgate Publishing Ltd, UK, 2011

**Saturday July 16 (Day 5)**

**Morning class:**

10:00-12:30 Serbia in “transition”: EU Integration

**Afternoon class:**

14:00-16:00 Serbia: polishing its image for Europe, part 1&2. (<http://www.france24.com/en/20110430-europe-district-serbie-part1#>)

**Sunday July 17 (Day 6)**

**Morning class:**

10:00-12:30 Final Session and Closure

**Afternoon class:**

14:00-16:00 Evaluation