Anth 430/530: Balkan Society and Folklore

Focusing on ethnicity, gender, politics, and folklore, this class explores the current and historical situation in the Balkans and the role of symbols, the state, and nationalism. An ethnographic approach examines socialism/postsocialism, rural/urban, age and gender relationships, life cycle and calendrical celebrations, and music and expressive arts. Readings are drawn from many disciplines. Slides, films, and guest presentations supplement the lectures and discussions. The class will be run interactively, with discussion and mutual respect.

I welcome questions and feedback via email, Canvas, telephone, in writing, and in person during office hours. I have a comment bag available at every class for quick anonymous feedback. If you need accommodation for any reason, please the Accessible Education Center, 346-1155, uoaec@uoregon.edu.

Please turn off all mobile devices during class. Computer use is permitted for class related activities, such as note taking.

Academic Integrity:
The University of Oregon’s policies on academic honesty and plagiarism can be found at conduct.uoregon.edu. Students are prohibited from committing or attempting to commit any act that constitutes academic misconduct. For example, students must properly acknowledge and document all sources of information (e.g. quotations, paraphrases, ideas). This includes material from the Internet. If you submit plagiarized work, you will be penalized and reported to the Office of the Dean of Students. Additional information is available at http://researchguides.uoregon.edu/citing-plagiarism.

Respect for the instructor and fellow students is imperative. Some of the materials in this class may be controversial. It is important that we listen to and respond civilly to one another, even when we don’t agree. I encourage everyone to participate and express their opinions freely.

Course requirements
1. 10% of the grade is based on attendance. Late arrivals and departures will count as an absence.
2. 10% of the grade is based on oral participation, including Canvas postings.
3. 10% of the grade is based on an in-class geography quiz that will be given without warning sometime during the first few weeks.
4. There are two take-home essay examinations, worth 35% +35% each (graduate students 25% + 25% each), due Monday, May 6 in class and Monday, June 10, 3 PM. Exams must be typed and lateness will be penalized.
5. Graduate students are required to do a research paper (8 pp.) in addition to the final and to present it in class (20% of grade, due June 5). and to present it in class. A 1-page research paper proposal with five
bibliographic entries is due April 10. Students are encouraged to meet with me to discuss possible topics and receive bibliographic assistance. Graduate students are required to read the optional readings.

6. Graduate students will lead one class discussion; please discuss this with me immediately. By 6 PM the day before, post questions and an outline on Discussion Board.

**Grading Rubric**
A – Outstanding performance relative to that required to meet course requirements; demonstrates a mastery of course content at the highest level.
B – Performance that is significantly above that required to meet course requirements; demonstrates a mastery of course content at a high level.
C – Performance that meets the course requirements in every respect; demonstrates an adequate understanding of course content.
D – Performance that is at the minimal level necessary to pass the course but does not fully meet the course requirements; demonstrates a marginal understanding of course content.
F – Performance in the course is unacceptable and does not meet the course requirements; demonstrates an inadequate understanding of the course content.

**Course Objectives**
- Identify the Balkan nations geographically and culturally.
- Trace the history of the Balkans, especially the Ottoman legacy and the socialist and postsocialist periods.
- Analyze the role of ethnicity and nationalism, especially ethnic conflict, in the Balkans.
- Identify the gendered dimensions of Balkan life.
- Analyze rituals (such as weddings) and other forms of folklore on multiple planes (symbolic, economic, political).
- Identify the varieties of Balkan folk music and its connection to politics.
- Trace the history and current situation of Balkan Roma.
- Analyze the changing roles of Balkan Romani music.
- Identify what an ethnographic approach offers.

The class utilizes a Canvas site. Under Modules You can find a Course Information Folder with the Syllabus and a list of anthropological definitions. There are separate folders for Maps and Powerpoints and Readings. Exams are posted in a separate folder.

**Readings**
The required readings consist of scholarly articles from journals and books, internet sources, and newspaper articles. Readings must be done prior to class discussion. Articles are posted in Canvas under Modules, Readings or via urls. Short readings and video clips are online via urls. Please refer to the Syllabus to distinguish what is required and what is optional.

Students are expected to be aware of current news in the Balkans; for news, see https://balkaninsight.com.

Several books were ordered in the UO Bookstore; they are mostly recommended for your future research (most are also on Reserve in the Library):

Sacco, Joe. Safe Area Goražde: The War in Eastern Bosnia 1992-95. Fantagraphics Books, 2000. (Required pages on Canvas; also on reserve)

Silverman, Carol. *Romani Routes: Cultural Politics and Balkan Music in Diaspora*. Oxford 2014. (Required pages will be on Canvas)


**Course Outline**

1. **April 1** Introduction to the history, geography, languages and peoples of the Balkans. Slides. Note these 1920s photos of Yugoslavia by Kurt Hielscher: https://www.slavorum.org/stunning-old-photos-of-yugoslavia-from-the-1920s/?fbclid=IwAR2Q19iPZ05FNh4yP0-mWveuhrOol2UFivvHdIdmCeczYHVheUEFLY6r39c

2. **April 3** Byzantine and Ottoman history and legacy via maps and slides. Conversions to Islam. Multiculturalism?


3. **April 8** Lived experiences of socialism/postsocialism. Feature fiction film: Good Bye Lenin (Germany, 2003, 121 minutes). Please be on time! Read the study guide on Canvas.

Verdery, Katherine 1996. What was Socialism and Why Did it Fail? In *What was Socialism and What Comes Next?* Princeton University Press, pp.19-38

Yugo-Nostalgia Grows as Harsh Realities Bite
Old federation offered comfort and security – which many would dearly like to have now.

Mirza Aujadzic - TRI Issue 710, 27 Sept 2011
Report on Yugo-Nostalgia Elicits Big Online Response
IWPR story touches a nerve as local republication draws flurry of reader comments.
By IWPR 28 Oct 2011
http://iwpr.net/report-news/report-yugo-nostalgia-elicits-big-online-response

4. April 10 The challenges of socialism and postsocialism. Discussion of Good Bye Lenin and Verdery.


Lessons for Liberalism from the “Illiberal East” April 2018:


Wedel, Janine. How Today’s Western Democracies Recall Eastern Europe under Communism https://culanth.org/fieldsights/d%C3%A9j%C3%A0-vu-how-todays-western-democracies-recall-eastern-europe-under-communism

6. April 17 Reevaluating socialism/postsocialism.


7. April 22 Land, village and family life, zadruga, social organization. Religion and ethnicity.
Brina, Tone. **Being Muslim the Bosnian Way.** Princeton University Press, 1995, pp. 3-36; 37-83.


**8. April 24** Gender: power/authority; domestic/public power.


**9. April 29** Gender, Sexuality, and Postsocialism

Gal, Susan and Gail Kligman. **The Politics of Gender after Socialism.** Princeton, 2000, pp. TBA

Ghodsee, Kristen. Why women have better sex under socialism, according to an anthropologist: An interview, December 2018.


**10. May 1** Foodways and Balkan culture. Guest presentation by Lindsey Foltz.

Readings TBA

**11. May 6 MIDTERM DUE** Balkan Folk Music Videos of Bulgarian rituals.

**Macedonian Bridal Costumes.** Ed. Carol Silverman, pp. 1-3 only. (UO Museum of Natural History, 1984).


**12. May 8** Bulgarian weddings; marriage customs. Videos.


Review Bringa


15. May 20 Post-war “Yugoslavia.” Bosnia as a divided country.

Fragile States: Continuing Struggles for Bosnia and Herzegovina (video, 15 minutes) http://pulitzercenter.org/video/fragile-states-continuing-struggles-bosnia-and-herzegovina also found at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r8R0XK7qtAE

Bosnia and Herzegovina: an ethnically divided country | DW Documentary (25 minutes) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lHSO0RQFRe8

Bosnia's pupils fight ethnically divided education - BBC News (2.5 minutes) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0wrlpJ34Lxs

http://balkanwitness.glypx.com/bosnias-frozen-conflicts.htm

Optional: “Two schools under one roof” (videos, 30 minutes)
Part 1: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H0Qx6J878co
Part II: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XmYOQFParAY&feature=related
Part III: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xD_SfPbwrIE&feature=related

https://balkaninsight.com/2019/03/19/karadzic-verdict-will-reinforce-ethnic-divisions-analysts-predict/

Newspaper articles TBA


17. **Roma in the Balkans**: Discrimination, Marginality, Mobilization, and Culture


Read at least 4 news items about the Balkans from these websites:
European Roma Rights Center: www.errc.org
European Roma Information Office: www.erionet.eu

May 27 No school


Silverman, Carol. *Romani Routes: Cultural Politics and Balkan Music in Diaspora*, Oxford University Press, 2014. Chapter 4: Transnational Families, pp. 59-81 and Chapter 5: Transnational Celebrations, pp. 82-106. As you read, take a look at some of the accompanying videos and photos, and listen to the music on the website that is referenced on these pages: [www.oup.com/us/romaniroutes](http://www.oup.com/us/romaniroutes). The username is Music1 and the password is Book5983. Also read text supplement 4.1 on the website.

19. **June 5** Macedonian Roma in New York City: Migration, Gender, and Family, and Music.


**Final Exam due Monday June 10, 3 PM.**