

EDITORS' NOTES

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As editors, we are happy to celebrate the twenty-fifth volume of the *Anthropology of East Europe Review* by taking stock of the shifting terrain of anthropological research on Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia. Cracking open our archives (see back issues on our website), it is fascinating to read the early work of now well-known scholars: an early course syllabus from Kathryn Verdery here, an essay from Chris Hann there.

When the journal was founded in 1982, it was a small newsletter with book reviews and conference announcements for researchers working in the region. In those early years, U.S.-based scholars had much more limited access to research sites in Eastern Europe, and few contributors to the journal worked in the Soviet Union. Many of the analyses appearing on the pages of the journal were published as open letter exchanges between scholars. At that moment, a key topic of debate in the pages of the newsletter was how anthropologists should place themselves and their knowledge within the world of Cold War academia and the broader national discourse on the region as part of the Soviet Union's "Evil Empire."

By 1989, the newsletter transformed into a journal under the editorship of Sam Beck and David Kideckel. That year's issue included articles exploring the resurgence of nationalism in Austria (Rotenberg and DeSoto, 1989, AEER 8) and Hungarian peasants' ambivalent feelings about their country's entry into the capitalist system (Lampland, 1989, AEER 8). In 1990, the journal published its first full-length article on the anthropology of the Soviet Union. The increasing volume of research in the region was reflected in the increasing number of articles in the issues published in the following 15 years, and the geographic range of the journal expanded through its partnership with Soyuz, the Postcommunist Cultural Studies Network.

And yet... one sees throughout the history of the journal a focus on a key underlying theme: the cultural consequences of rapid social, political, and economic change. In his 1983 essay on the role of Eastern European anthropology, David Kideckel wrote:

In Eastern Europeanist anthropology our struggle is largely one to define basic meanings... we ought to make "actually existing socialism," i.e. the current social systems as they really operate, our chief concern. (AEER 3(1))

Elaborating on the need to provide a "pig's eye" perspective on everyday life under state socialism and to give ethnographic description priority, Kideckel continues:

While this would recognize the difficult base at which most European states set out on their path to development and the many successes and achievements along the way; so it would also consider the manner by which these processes have gone awry and the often large human costs of the process. (ibid)

Kideckel was, of course, writing of state socialism as a development process, but his words strike a special chord with those of us now working on those aspects of social life that have been once again transformed by neoliberal policies and postsocialist development processes—cultural processes fraught with new, unintended consequences and often very large human costs. Like Kideckel, we argue that anthropology's primary contribution to knowledge about the region remains its attentiveness to participants' interpretations of the world and their situated practices, and at times, taking the "pig's eye" view of larger scale processes such as globalization, neoliberalism, and Europeanization.

This issue's "Symposium" on micro-processes of post-socialist transformation offers this kind of contextualized understanding of broader processes. We would like to extend our thanks to our guest editors, Hülya Demirdirek (University of Victoria) and Lale Yalçın-Heckmann (Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology), for assembling such a rich and textured collection of articles for this special issue. These papers, which originated as contributions to a panel discussion at the European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA) conference 2004, focus on what the editors call the "micro-processes" of postsocialist transformation. Their introduction, "Encounters of the postsocialist kind" leads the collection and lays out the key issues that the articles explore.

In our *Open Forum* this edition, we include three compelling articles from the region. Hana Horakova contributes to discussions of European identity formation, from the vantage point of one Czech village. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork in the rural area of Dolní Roveň in the Czech Republic, Horakova examines the relationship between reconfigurations of rural lifestyles and the project of European unification. Vlado Kotnik's article offers us insights from the slopes, and explores the role of (alpine) skiing in Slovenian culture and society. Examining its historical and contemporary status, he suggests that we understand the current popularity of downhill skiing in Slovenia in terms of the broader issue of national identity formation. Finally, Alex Skalska analyzes the rise of radical right- and left-wing parties in the Polish government, drawing from extensive field research with political activists in Silesia.

Finally, we would like to announce that our term as editors of AEER is nearing its close next year. We have greatly enjoyed our tenure as co-editors, and we feel honored to have followed in the footsteps of our colleagues who served as editors before us: William Lockwood, Sam Beck,

David Kideckel, Robert Rotenberg, and Barb West. Hosting the journal at UMass and having access to our contributors' most current research on the region have been wonderful experiences for us. We are now looking to pass the baton to a new editorial team. If you are interested in taking on the role of editor, or have suggestions as to colleagues who might be, please contact us.

We would like to extend our warm thanks to Robert Rotenberg for his ongoing work maintaining the AEER website at De Paul University. We are grateful to the Center for Public Policy and Administration (CPPA) at the University of Massachusetts for providing the resources for research and editorial assistance and to the Department of Anthropology for providing overhead support for the journal. Finally, we would like to extend a very special thanks to Lisa Hilt, whose enthusiastic assistance and careful and thorough eye has ensured the smooth running of the journal these past two years, and who is now moving on as she graduates from the UMass Center for Public Policy and Administration. We know that she will accomplish great things in the field of international public policy, and we send her our very best wishes.

CALL FOR PAPERS

FALL 2007 ANTHROPOLOGY OF EAST EUROPE REVIEW

We invite you to submit articles on current research projects for the "Open Forum" of our Fall 2007 issue. We are also seeking submissions of syllabi or essays on teaching related to the anthropology of Eastern Europe and Eurasia. Papers should be no more than 7,000 words (including endnotes and references). Please send your electronic submissions as a Microsoft Word .doc file to: anthroeasteuropereview@gmail.com