

EDITOR'S NOTES

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In this issue of the *Anthropology of East Europe Review* we feature articles on topics as diverse as health care reform in Ukraine, the Evangelical-Baptist Church of Georgia, and changing regimes of retail and consumption in Bulgaria, among others. A few unifying themes, however, undergird these wide-ranging articles. Several authors place under scrutiny the postsocialist city itself, and in particular ways that citizens variously navigate, narrate, and experience the city. Multiculturalism is also a key theme, especially how multiculturalism is imagined, imposed, performed, and experienced in specific postsocialist contexts. Finally, questions of morality are central here, whether in terms of the moral duties of the state and physicians in providing medical care, or as regards changing notions of hospitality and host-guest mutual obligations. I am very grateful to Cordula Gdaniec and Tanya Richardson, both of whom were instrumental in preparing the spring 2009 issue.

In their article, Kristof van Assche and Petruța Teampău present a fascinating exploration of the “local myth of cosmopolitanism” in the Romanian town of Sulina. The authors employ a clever metaphor of the palimpsest to describe the “layered encounters” through which Sulina’s residents remember and narrate the city’s past, and also reach for a wished-for European (EU) future of multicultural populations “united in diversity.”

Similarly interested in imaginings and performances of diversity in the city, William Eastwood examines how religious minorities (in particular, Georgian Baptists) engage in particular kinds of performance to navigate the de facto Orthodox Georgian public space in Tbilisi. Eastwood takes readers on two processions to examine how members of the Evangelical-Baptist Church carve out a discursive and physical presence for themselves in the city.

Olga Filippova investigates school ABC primers as reflective of identity politics in Soviet, transition-period, and independent Ukraine. She analyzes how the primers’ images and texts reflect transformations in official state narratives of nationhood and national identity, national/cultural heroes, the behavior expected of citizens (especially schoolchildren), and the methods and purposes of education itself.

In his contribution, Grant Garstka applies theories of urban consumption and postmodern urbanism to the postsocialist city to scrutinize new consumption regimes in Stara Zagora, Bulgaria. He documents an increasing social pluralism of consumer groups. Of particular interest here are the effects of apparently unregulated hypermarkets (mostly foreign-owned box stores) on consumption practices and urban spaces; Garstka specifically warns of sharpening class inequalities and the formation of dual-cities.

Similar to Garstka, Anna Zhelnina is interested in changing retail spaces in the postsocialist urban context—St. Petersburg, Russia. She examines the restructuring of urban retail spaces from two main perspectives: the everyday consumption experiences of shoppers, and the motives and actions of decision-making power brokers. Zhelnina scrutinizes recent changes undertaken as supposed “civilizing” moves after socialism: standardization, depersonalization, and the consolidation of big business. Whereas Garstka finds increasing consumer diversity in Stara Zagora, Zhelnina highlights the

decline in urban diversity that is occurring in St. Petersburg as access to public space and participation in legal retail business are increasingly restricted.

Maryna Bazylevych explores health care reform in Ukraine from several angles; she focuses on official political discourse on the one hand, and popular interpretations and everyday actions of stakeholders on the other hand. She draws on interviews with health care administrators and physicians (two groups with a major stake in the reform process) to document the “multiple moral codes” that inform contemporary Ukrainian medicine as patients, physicians, and politicians negotiate the meanings of “rights” and “responsibility” and struggle over redefining state-citizen relations.

Abel Polese takes us on a comparative ethnographic exploration of changing hospitality mores and practices in and around Odessa, Ukraine and Batumi, Georgia. Polese considers the effects of postsocialist temporal and economic constraints to argue that although the form of hospitality ideals, obligations, and rituals may be changing, the essence of hospitality in these spaces is actually very stable. He provides a rich symbolic analysis of hospitality in all its breadth and depth, allowing readers “to ‘taste’ the way economic development, marketization and urbanization have reshaped cultural practices and alliance building” in diverse postsocialist locales.

Finally, we feature an article by Andrei Simic that originally appeared in the spring 2008 issue of *AEER*, but was printed with one page omitted. We apologize for the error.

With this issue I am pleased to welcome onboard Neringa Klumbyte as book review editor. Books for review may be sent to Dr. Neringa Klumbyte, Department of Anthropology, Miami University, 164 Upham Hall, Oxford, Ohio, 45056. If you are interested in reviewing books for *AEER*, please e-mail to klumbyn@muohio.edu.

This is the last issue that will benefit from the brilliant editorial assistance of Abigail Rich, who will receive her Master’s degree in Anthropology from Indiana University this summer. Congratulations, Abi, many thanks, and best of luck to you.

CALL FOR PAPERS

FALL 2009 AND SPRING 2010 ISSUES OF THE *ANTHROPOLOGY OF
EAST EUROPE REVIEW*

The editor solicits articles and conference review essays for the Fall 2009 and Spring 2010 issues' "Open Forum," "Reviews," and "Teaching" sections. Papers should be no more than 2,500-6,000 words (including endnotes and references) and conference reviews should be 300-800 words in length. Please send electronic submissions as a Microsoft Word .doc (or as an .rtf file) to: anthroeasteuropereview@gmail.com

Papers and reviews for **Fall 2009** should be received no later than **August 15, 2009**.
Papers and reviews for **Spring 2010** should be received no later than **March 15, 2010**.