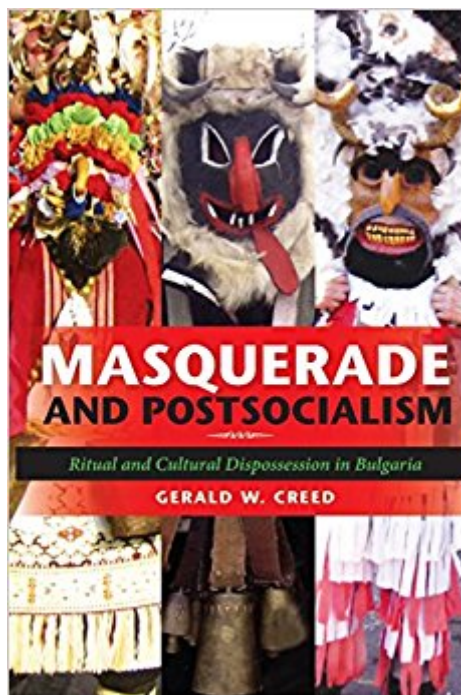




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Masquerade And Postsocialism: Ritual And Cultural Dispossession In Bulgaria (New Anthropologies Of Europe)



Synopsis

Gerald W. Creed analyzes contemporary mumming rituals in rural Bulgaria for what they reveal about life after socialism and the current state of postsocialist studies. Mumming rituals have flourished in the post-Soviet era. Elaborately costumed dancers go from house to house demanding sustenance and bestowing blessings. Through the analysis of these rites, Creed critiques key themes in postsocialist studies, including understandings of civil society and democracy, gender and sexuality, autonomy and community, and ethnicity and nationalism. He argues that these events reveal indigenous cultural resources that could have been used both practically and intellectually to ease the postsocialist reconstruction of Bulgarian society, but were not.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Masquerade represents an important theoretical and rich ethnographic contribution to studies of postsocialist Eastern Europe with far-reaching import and application for folklorists, anthropologists, and other scholars whose work is located at the intersection of culture, postcolonialism, and postsocialism." *Journal of Folklore Research* "Gerald Creed has produced an unusually perceptive account of the cultural dynamics of post-Communist development in Bulgaria. His efforts not only illuminate the patterns and practices of Postsocialism, but his investigation also endeavors to radically alter the dominant frameworks within which debates on East European transitions tend

to be positioned." *Slavic and East European Journal* "Masquerade and Postsocialism is written with great sympathy for the people it describes and bears the marks of a work matured by decades of fieldwork." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute (JRAI)* "Masquerade and Postsocialism would be of interest to anyone in globalization or development studies, as well as European studies. Creed's emphasis on the role of ritual and performance broadens the audience... Creed demonstrates that ritual, a long-standing topic of anthropology, not only serves as a useful site of analysis but can also challenge teleological ideals of Western modernity."

Anthropology & Europe Review "[A] brilliant scholar's masterpiece."

American Anthropologist Gerald Creed's *Masquerade and Postsocialism: Ritual and Cultural Dispossession in Bulgaria* is an empirically rich and theoretically sophisticated analysis of the postsocialist condition in rural Bulgaria. Using the Bulgarian ritual of mumming as a window onto the lived experiences of ordinary men and women, Creed masterfully explores a variety of scholarly themes. Aspasia "Creed's book is both ethnographically rich and theoretically significant. Moreover, it is a deeply humane book, an homage to the resilience and resourcefulness of the Bulgarian peasants whom Creed has made it his life's work to understand. Accessible to a broad audience, it is must reading for anyone interested in the costs of the 'revolutions' of 1989." *Slavic Review* "Brilliant.... An outstanding demonstration of how analysis of the paradoxes of the postsocialist condition can contribute to anthropological theory and to the critique of Euro-American notions of modernity." *Chris Hann, Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology* "Masterfully investigates the contemporary performance of distinctive... mumming rites as a means of interrogating postsocialism.... Accessible, engaging, and strong."

Donna Buchanan, author of Performing Democracy: Bulgarian Music and Musicians in Transition "Masquerade and Postsocialism is a valuable book for the general eloquence of its arguments, its solid engagement with ritual as well as its discussion of broader ideological frameworks of postsocialism, nationalism and modernity. It is a theoretically rich work, ethnographically thorough and thought provoking." *Social Anthropology* "Gerald W. Creed's *Masquerade and Postsocialism* is a masterful analysis of key social themes as gender and sexuality, civil society and democracy, community and ethnicity. The book provides a vivid analysis of a ritual performance as a source of meaningful knowledge about people's lives." *Journal of American Folklore* "Masquerade and Postsocialism was an exhilarating read that offered much inspiration on the relevance of anthropological insights into larger social problems and critique of hegemonic models for political and economic reforms. Clearly and accessibly written, I [Yuson Jung] strongly recommend this book for both introductory and advanced

level courses" – American Ethnologist "[A]n empirically rich and theoretically sophisticated analysis of the postsocialist condition in rural Bulgaria." – Anthropos

Gerald W. Creed is Professor of Anthropology at Hunter College and the City University of New York Graduate Center, where he is Executive Officer of the Anthropology Program. He is author of *Domesticating Revolution: From Socialist Reform to Ambivalent Transition in a Bulgarian Village*.

Very interesting, enlightening and educational documentation of a cultural ritual that spans generations of Bulgarians and survived during communism and post communism.

very fast, receive it next day. very comfortable and very fine . the price is cheap and the quality is high. for my husband, I have never owned an actual bread product before but since I have started making my own bread, none of the knives I had were long enough to do a good job so I ordered this one. It is amazing. It's long enough for any loaf you may need it for and absolutely no difficulty is creating a smooth, even slice of bread. I would recommend it to anyone who is thinking of getting a good bread product.

Masquerade and Postsocialism is a thoughtful and colorful investigation of the kukeri tradition (i.e. mummers) of Bulgaria. Written by a top rate scholar and one of the first U.S.-based anthropologists of Bulgaria (who also did fieldwork in the country during the late communist era for his first book, *Domesticating Revolution*), this book is an insightful look into local cultural practices and how they are shaped by larger political and economic realities. Highly recommended!

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