

# THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF WAR & PEACE

Perspectives on the  
Nuclear Age

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& Contributors



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## CONTENTS

Acknowledgment	ix
Foreword Alexandre Berenstein	xi
Introduction David Pitt	xiii
<b>PART I TRIBAL MENTALITY AND THE COLD WAR</b>	<b>1</b>
1 The International Tribe and the Cold War David Pitt	3
2 Inducement to Military Participation in Tribal Societies Walter Goldschmidt	15
3 U.S. Military Elites: Perceptions and Values Donna Brasset	32
4 Anthropology and the Myths of American Foreign Policy William O. Beeman	49
5 Witchcraft and the Cold War Paul R. Turner	66
<b>PART II NUCLEAR WAR AND THE COLD WAR</b>	<b>77</b>
6 The Drift to War Laura Nader	79
7 Steps toward World War III Albert Bergesen	87

8	Biological and Social Consequences of a Nuclear War <i>Elizabeth Schueler and George Armelagos</i>	103
9	Star Wars and Arms Control <i>Robert M. Bowman</i>	114
10	The Dilemma of Disarming <i>Keith Otterbein</i>	128
<b>PART III ANTHROPOLOGICAL RESEARCH AND THE COLD WAR</b>		139
11	Anthropology and War: Theory, Politics, Ethics <i>R. Brian Ferguson</i>	141
12	Anthropologists Going into the Cold: Research in the Age of Mutually Assured Destruction <i>Steven L. Sampson and David A. Kideckel</i>	160
Conclusion <i>Paul R. Turner</i>		174
Contributors		179
Bibliography		180
Index		196

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

It is only in retrospect that we can see how this volume had its inception. It started with a paper that I presented at the 83d annual meeting of the American Anthropological association in Denver, Colorado, November of 1984. The paper was entitled, "Witchcraft and the Cold War," and an expanded version of it appears in this volume. I submitted the original version to Robert A. Rubinstein, editor of the *Newsletter of the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences*. He published the article in 1985 and it was read by my coeditor-to-be, David Pitt, of the Geneva International Peace Research Institute. David was unknown to me at the time, but he wrote and suggested we work together on a volume on anthropology and the cold war. I agreed, and this volume is the result of our long-distance correspondence and the work of our contributors.

Appreciation is due to Marcia Lang for typing the manuscript on computer disks in her "spare" time as administrative assistant in the Department of Anthropology, University of Arizona. Barbara Fregoso, departmental secretary, did an outstanding job of preparing the final copy of our manuscript for the publisher. Ann Gross has been our book editor at Bergin & Garvey, and she has gone beyond the mechanics of editing to make suggestions that have had a significant impact on our book and for which we are grateful. Finally, we, the editors, have found Bergin & Garvey to be good publishers to work with. We recommend them to anyone looking for a publisher.

Paul R. Turner



# ANTHROPOLOGISTS GOING INTO THE COLD: RESEARCH IN THE AGE OF MUTUALLY ASSURED DESTRUCTION

Steven L. Sampson

David A. Kideckel

The cold war and the tensions it spawns seem permanent features of the late twentieth century. As a document issued by the Methodist clergy suggests (Pace 1986), the policy of nuclear deterrence adopted by both superpowers has condemned East and West to endemic competition, conflict, and mutual suspicion. However, though the cold war's international dimensions are well known, the chief question that occupies us here is its influence on social scientific and, specifically, anthropological research (cf. Byrnes 1976a).

The social scientific ramifications of the cold war are many. In the West, particularly the United States, it shapes university budgets and grant priorities, affects basic social scientific paradigms and preconceptions of other societies; and influences both the dissemination of research results and their public reception. Though these effects are general throughout the social sciences, anthropological research about Eastern European socialist societies is especially influenced. Since these so-called captive nations are a direct object of the cold war struggle, they have heightened sensitivity to the extremist politics of the period. Anthropological research, on the other hand, is predicated on face-to-face interaction and in-depth subjective understanding of other societies, practices which fly in the face of both Eastern and Western priorities in the cold war context.<sup>1</sup>

This chapter thus assesses some of the implications of cold war politics and culture for anthropological research. It particularly focuses on Western anthropologists in Eastern European research and the role of anthropological knowledge and practice for either bridging or reinforcing cold war-inspired cultural suspicions. Though this essay is based largely on our and others' experiences in Romania, we feel it has wider applicability in other Eastern European states as well.<sup>2</sup>

To be sure, fieldwork in Eastern Europe has much in common with anthropological research in general. Like others, anthropologists working in the cold war context are faced with problems of identifying research sites, gaining entry and building rapport in communities, steering clear of factional quarrels, gathering systematic data, and maintaining their health and emotional stability. However, as June Nash (1975) pointed out, there is more to fieldwork than the field worker. Conditions encountered in the field are shaped by its specific time-space location which, in Eastern Europe, is particularly colored by the cold war.

That the cold war provides the basic context of Eastern European research was constantly brought home to us during fieldwork and in subsequent discussions with interested parties in the West. Romanians of all walks had problems comprehending our presence in their country and often interpreted it in cold war terms. They often assumed we were agents of the United States government, various socialist governments, or descendants of expropriated kulaks returned to sue for patrimonial rights. Still others accepted our stated research goals but questioned their use for anything but political ends.

These suspicions were initially laid to rest during a decade of intermittent research as we established a degree of permanency in our social relations and became fairly well integrated into our host communities and became (we thought) familiar and unthreatening to regional officials. However, despite our integration in regional life, the mid-1980s was a turning point for us. Steven Sampson was denied entry into Romania and declared *persona non grata*, and David Kideckel had a number of restrictions placed on his research in a 1984 visit.

Meanwhile, home circumstances were analogous. For example, our discussions with academics and others were invariably interrupted with questions concerning how we were able to do research in Romania in the first place. Western colleagues especially questioned the veracity of our data and were skeptical of statistics garnered by us from local and regional censuses and other documents. Some people even suggested that lying was necessary to accomplish any sort of germane Eastern European research.

Thinking about these events and interpretations, we came to see that they were based on mutually distorted or mistaken assumptions



about both Eastern European socialist society and the Western research enterprise. Given the mutual suspicion and caricatured images they presented, it was logical to turn to the cold war as at least a partial explanation for these distortions. In particular, we were forced to reflect on how our own research experience was shaped by our and others' cold war assumptions and to examine what the role of American anthropologists in Eastern European socialist societies is and ought to be. Consideration of these questions, however, first demands analysis of both the nature of the cold war and how it shapes the Eastern European research environment as a whole.

### CHILLING ASSUMPTIONS—COLD WAR CONCEPTIONS AND MISCONCEPTIONS

There are a number of common understandings about the cold war that must be addressed and enlarged in order to grasp its relationship to anthropological research in Eastern Europe. In popular terms, the cold war is the nonmilitary struggle between two competing world orders, the "Free World" and the "Communist bloc." As usually conceived, the struggle has both ideological and geopolitical implications. Ideologically, from the Free World's perspective, the conflict revolves around Western freedom vs. Eastern repression. In the Communist perspective it concerns the struggle between the exploitation of individualism versus the security of collectivism. The ideological struggle translates geopolitically into a struggle for international influence. The West talks of Soviet expansionism via surrogate regimes in places like Afghanistan, Ethiopia, and Nicaragua, while the East sees Western imperialism throughout the world attempting to protect its dying, exploitative world order.

For those who accept the Manichaeian view of reality, the cold war is pervasive and all interaction between the competing powers is part of the struggle—with victories or defeats seen as the outcome of particular events. Any event (from chess tournaments to space disasters to nuclear meltdowns) is part of the overall struggle, and all exchanges are potential confrontations and tests of strength and/or weakness. Since all actions are thus part of the grand cold war scheme, the potential for conspiracy theories is extraordinary. Instead of simple distrust, the relations between the two competing blocs are elevated to a "culture of suspicion" whereby there are no coincidences. It is this culture of suspicion, then, that serves as the backdrop for anthropology in Eastern Europe and generates some particular pressures on the fieldwork enterprise.

### POLITICO-CENTRISM AND THE VERDICT MENTALITY

The pervasiveness of the cold war has caused it to become fixed in Western and Eastern political consciousness. In the West, this is also fostered by an enculturation process replete with popularized images of Eastern Europe from the "Six O'Clock News," school history lessons (cf. FitzGerald 1979), air raid drills, and the whole range of international crises which punctuated the 1950s and 1960s. The permanent merging of cold war and consciousness engenders what we call "politico-centrism," an internalized belief in the superiority of one's own political system and an automatic suspicion of our "adversaries."

Though analogous to ethnocentrism, politico-centrism in some ways is even more pernicious due to the potential implications of the cold war struggle as well as the intellectual blinders it places on the researcher. Though all anthropologists have a degree of naivety about the people and places where they conduct research, it is our belief that notions of Eastern Europe are more ingrained in the American worldview than the hazy images we have of New Guinea, East Africa, or the Amazon. While anthropological research in the Third World is basically a matter of acquiring knowledge, Eastern European research requires a systematic purging of prior misconceptions before one can begin knowledge acquisition.

Without this purging politico-centrism colors the assumptions one brings into the field and shapes the questions asked of one's data. In particular it fosters a "verdict mentality" where one continually evaluates the overall worth of socialism as a social system—is it progressing or degenerating, good or bad, creating equality or inequality? The contrast here with tribal or Third World research is instructive. Though anthropologists who work in these regions are occasionally asked to explain them to others, they are not usually pressed for a comprehensive evaluation except during some crisis (often brought on, we might add, as a spin-off to cold war struggles; e.g., the civil wars in Nicaragua and Angola). Verdicts about Eastern European socialism, provocative as they are, do little more than confirm the preconceptions of the questioner and force the anthropologist to place the research into artificially contrived categories.

More to the point for actual fieldwork, the culture of suspicion makes human contact between the two camps difficult at best and fraught with numerous obstacles. Ideologically, it manifests in the fear of subversion or "ideological pollution," by which people with foreign ideas will negatively infect our or their society. Geopolitically there is the fear that espionage may weaken the political or military order. In the conduct of research, then, there is an *a priori* assumption that all individuals so engaged have dark motives until or unless they prove



by host countries or their own concern lest they be so labeled.

## TWO, THREE, MANY COLD WARS

Other conditions shaping anthropological research in and about Eastern Europe are the differential way the cold war affects individual states and its changing, cyclical nature over time. Typically, the cold war is often seen to affect all participant states fairly similarly. As the conflict revolves around the two superpowers, it is often assumed that their "allies" pretty much follow their lead. Thus, détente between the United States and the Soviet Union supposedly demands détente between the allied states as well. When the superpower conflict boils over, one also expects a chilling of relations between other participant states.

Despite this alleged homogeneity, variation in Eastern European national, political, economic, and cultural environments suggest that the cold war experience also varies. No doubt, United States-Soviet relations affect other countries; American and Soviet allies are often called on to follow their "big brothers" and demonstrate unity in boycotts, economic sanctions, and other diplomatic initiatives. However, there are other cold wars besides the United States-Soviet one. In fact, for the Eastern European states the cold war is as much a struggle for them to maneuver between the Soviets and the West to satisfy their own national interests, as it is their following the Soviet lead.

Given their differential integration in the overall conflict, the states of the competing blocs periodically readjust their diplomatic postures and political economies to the irregular shifts, obstacles, and possibilities of the basic cold war competition. Thus, each Eastern European state is involved in essentially three cold wars: the main one as Soviet client, its own separate "war" with the United States and its allies, and a cold war of sorts with the Soviet Union and its allies. Similarly, each of these cold wars runs in its own cycle of "détente-tension-crisis" that may, though not necessarily, parallel the main United States-Soviet cycle.

Romania especially illustrates these multiple cold wars. Over two decades in relations with the Soviets and its allies, Romania has pursued a policy of relative autonomy. It was the only "bloc" country to maintain relations with Israel after 1967, to denounce the invasions of Czechoslovakia in 1968 and Afghanistan in 1979, and to defy the Soviet-led boycott of the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics. Romania, in fact, has a pervasive suspicion of its allies. Work stoppages, industrial explosions, and the like are all attributed to Soviet intrigues, and there

are constant confrontations over small and large issues. At the same time, there is fear of ideological or geopolitical subversion by the Soviet Union and Hungary which, from their persistent conflict over Transylvania, Romania sees as a Soviet surrogate.

The cold war cycle between Romania and the West has its own logic separate from, though related to, the main United States-Soviet conflict. To facilitate its autonomy from the bloc, Romania was rewarded with a variety of perquisites by the United States and its allies. Richard Nixon visited it in 1969, and it was granted most-favored-nation trading status in 1975, extensively increasing its participation in Western capital markets from the mid-1970s. Romania has responded by allowing increased immigration from that time (though its human rights records is still one of the more dismal in Eastern Europe).

The expansion of anthropological research in Romania was thus coincidental to the developing tension in Romanian-Soviet relations and the warming of Romanian-Western ones. Romania in the 1970s was an attractive site for anthropological research because of its rapid industrial transformation, ecological and ethnic diversity, and archaic folk regions, among other reasons. However, its attractiveness was first possible due to the changing cold war context. In virtually every year of the 1970s at least two American anthropologists were among those utilizing part of the eighty "man months" quota provided to the International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX), and anthropologists were also grantees in Romania on various Fulbright exchanges. Simultaneously with the American research effort, there were also French, Swiss, and West German anthropologists active in the country.

## RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS OF THE MULTIPLE COLD WAR

For social science in general and anthropology in particular the shifting nature of the cold war in Eastern Europe causes uneven research possibilities. American anthropological research on Eastern Europe began in the interwar period with Philip Mosely's Balkan research (cf. Byrnes, ed. 1976b) and continued in World War II with Columbia University's "Culture at a Distance" project (Benedict 1946, 1953; Halpern and Kideckel 1983). However, since the war, there has never been a time when each of the Eastern states has been simultaneously open for Western anthropological research. Instead, as illustrated by Romania, the multiple cold war cycle results in some states openly encouraging research while others actively prevent it.

A brief chronology clearly shows this. Tito's Yugoslavia, beginning with the break with COMECON and continuing through its ascendant role in the nonaligned movement, was the first Eastern state to allow



an impressive array of diverse studies issued (Halpern 1958; Hammel 1968; Lockwood 1975; Sinic 1972; Winner 1971). However, though East-West relations warmed in the early 1970s, Tito's worsening health, Yugoslavia's unique ethnic problems, and its problematic relation with the Soviets caused a restriction of anthropological access such that current research there is hedged around by a number of limitations.

As Yugoslav research diminished, Romania began allowing greater Western social scientific and anthropological research correlated with the campaign for most-favored-nation status, increased import of Western capital, and the Ceaușescu government's use of nationalism and anti-Sovietism as a device to further its own legitimacy. Romanian field research was in vogue through the 1970s and also resulted in a variety of diverse studies.<sup>3</sup>

As discussed above, Romanian research possibilities in the 1980s are restricted due to the economic crisis, deepening internal political problems, and its own ethnic restiveness and related problems with Hungary over Transylvania. Currently, then, in the midst of the Reagan-Gorbachev stand-off most American and Western anthropological fieldwork is concentrated in Poland and Hungary where diverse influences are at work. Poland continues to seek an opening to the West in the aftermath of martial law, while the general liberalization of Hungarian life also allows for an increased anthropological presence.

Aside from the resulting uncertainty about access to the field, cold war cycles have other implications for Eastern European anthropological research and the conceptualization of Eastern Europe. First, comparativism suffers as people study different areas at different times (cf. Halpern and Kideckel 1983:394). Second, cultural transformations are harder to gauge, since it is well nigh impossible to maintain steady access to particular nations over time. Third, the cold war cycle often paradoxically encourages naive or unrealistic views of Eastern European nations as Western anthropologists enter these countries on the upswing of the cycle, when conditions for research are optimal, instead of on the downswing when conditions are more difficult.<sup>4</sup> By themselves, each of the above implications is not fatal. Taken together, though, they constitute a serious deficiency in using Eastern European ethnographic description as a data base for developing theories of modern socialist life.

There are also implications for the conduct of fieldwork that derive from cold war conditions. First, as Western anthropologists in Eastern Europe come not just from other countries, but from the "other side," they are initially faced with depoliticizing their presence in each field setting. Second, the actual nature of field projects also makes anthropologists particularly vulnerable to cold war tensions. Unlike other

social science studies, anthropological projects tend to be long-term, to be located outside capital cities, to deal with common people and current events, and to require fluency in local languages; all these make anthropologists more susceptible to the culture of suspicion.

Anthropologists are on the job twenty-four hours a day at the café, at home with host families, and in the fields with collective farmers and private peasants. They place a high value on all this information. Given the cold war notion that all knowledge is useful, the culture of suspicion can then play itself out with accusations regarding anthropological motives, activities, or intentions. In a culture of suspicion, anthropology and espionage are considered the same thing, since all knowledge about Eastern European countries (at particular times in their specific cold war cycles) is, in effect, a state secret.

## THE COMMUNITY CONTEXT OF THE RESEARCH

With the general influence of the cold war on anthropological research outlined above, we turn now to a brief examination of its specific influence on our actual fieldwork. Romania's role in the multiple cold war manifested as we entered our respective villages. Since we were unlike British or French anthropologists returning to their former colonies as researchers or members of development projects, the Romanians were under no traditional obligation to accept us. However, our access to the field was made possible by the cold war dynamic of the mid-1970s. Once we received national permission for village residence, local officials were required to accept us, which they did with the usual mixture of caution, curiosity, and enthusiasm.

In the absence of established channels for placing American anthropologists into Romanian villages, there was a host of small problems to resolve. Before we officially settled into our communities there were inevitable delays, with resulting tensions and anxieties about losing valuable field time. These were increased by our ignorance of bureaucratic procedure and a range of simple cultural and linguistic misunderstandings. For example, one of us waited six weeks for permission to settle in one community only to find that he had been approved for the wrong village. The entire process had to be reinstituted.

As discussed above, like anthropologists working elsewhere, we experienced difficulties in clarifying our role in our communities. However, the cold war context particularly exaggerated the confusion about our presence. There were problems in building rapport specific to the circumstances of Americans doing research in socialist communities. In our local relationships we tried to treat all citizens equally in order



however, often put villagers into ambiguous positions. Sometimes contact with us enhanced social prestige (e.g., our presence at a wedding); more often it was discomforting. Though most villagers talked openly with us about any variety of topics, the political implications of these conversations were never far from the surface.

Other citizens were obviously concerned about becoming too close to us lest they be politically compromised. As far as we know, nobody was sanctioned or threatened because of conversations with us, though many were asked to summarize their discussions with us, by security officials, after the fact. Thus, relations with some individuals always remained at the formal level. Given these deep-seated barriers growing from the culture of suspicion, we could only react by trying to define ourselves in our communities, specifying who we were, what we were trying to do, why we were trying to do it, and how we were going about it.

Suspicious about us and our activities often arose during public meetings. Meetings serve as forums for decision making, arenas of public controversy, and reflections of the social and political workings of the Romanian community. Permission for us to attend meetings was at the discretion of local officials, but due to legal restrictions some meetings were off-limits (e.g., meetings of Communist Party cells, normally open only to Party members). On some occasions our presence at a meeting caused anxiety for officials and/or participants. For example, a visiting county official was shocked to notice one of us taking notes during his speech, whereupon local officials were asked for a full explanation for our presence and we had to produce our authorizations.

At times we also felt the ambiguity, tension, and embarrassment of social interaction as keenly as members of the communities where we worked. For example, we were occasionally unduly suspicious about some informants and wrongly assumed them to be security officials. In other situations, and contrary to our expectations, some people were neither circumspect nor taciturn but expressed their feelings to us about state policies or their difficulties in the factory or on the collective farm, publicly, loudly, and often in response to an innocuous query on our part. Needless to say, our being used as public sounding boards provoked anxiety and uncertainty for our own position of social neutrality within the communities and made the field situation even more problematic.

There were also constant problems about how to interpret our field observations. On one hand, intense expressions about the frustrations of everyday Romanian life, as those described above, put a strain on our attempt to avoid politico-centrism and the verdict mentality about socialist society. Thus, we occasionally interpreted essentially short-

term, personal problems like alcoholism or family conflict as indicative of socialism per se, though at home we would never see them as proof of the decadence of capitalism.

On the other hand, as the fieldwork went well and we had the extensive cooperation of Romanian officials and collaboration with Romanian scholars, we also fell prey to the naiveté that a cold war thaw encourages. Though we were somewhat critical of certain regime policies, in our work we never really examined the basic premises on which the Romanian system was based and which, a few years later, would produce the extreme deprivation and repression the country now knows. We tended to avoid touchy political questions, such as legitimate Transylvanian Magyar grievances, and we also downplayed any disagreements we had with state policies and practices. On the whole, we rationalized an awful lot!

Our activities after formal on-site research ended also were influenced by the multiple cold war relationships in which we previously had been enmeshed. Thus, some of our post-fieldwork activities helped Romanian officials and scholars maintain trust in us but also embroiled us in the third cold war between Romania, the Soviet Union, and the rest of the bloc. A key event in this was the Romanian Research Group's polemic with a Hungarian-American anthropologist regarding the Transylvanian ethnic conflict (Romanian Research Group 1979; Sozan 1977, 1979). Here our response clearly overlapped with Romanian policy toward the province and its Magyar minority. This encouraged the Romanians to consider us as allied with their cold war position and dampened any negative repercussions about our other publications which were mildly critical of regime policy and practice.

Let us recapitulate aspects of our fieldwork in Romania and its aftermath in the 1970s. Basically, American anthropologists entered the country at a time of détente between the United States and Romania and tension/crisis between Romania and her allies. Anthropologists were seen by the Romanians as possible vehicles to help solidify relations with the West and as allies in their cold war with the Soviet Union and Hungary. This state of affairs was dependent on both internal stability in Romania itself and in its relations both with the United States and the Soviet Union.

We assumed that our relationship with Romania would persist, that once this trust had been established between us and our host nation and communities we could continue our work with only slight adjustments in consideration of developing international relations. We were wrong. We now know that this atmosphere of trust merely reflected a tactical alliance that developed under the specific cold war conditions of the 1970s and that once these conditions changed so too did the possibilities and nature of our research.

In summing up our 1970s fieldwork and postfield experiences, we



This success, as we have discussed, was partly due to the conjuncture between the three cold wars and the quality of United States-Soviet, United States-Romanian, and Soviet-Romanian relations at the time. This is not to say that other factors were inconsequential. Clearly, the atmosphere between American researchers and Romanian officials and scholars was relatively open and optimistic. We developed long-term rapport with villagers and scholars and officials, having returned to do fieldwork several times without any extreme repercussions on peoples' lives. In addition, we actively tried to allay the suspicion built up in the cold war atmosphere by providing as much information about ourselves and our research as possible. Our research and friendships flourished and we left the field with considerable optimism about both.

### THE 1980s—CHANGING CLIMATES AND FAIR-WEATHER FRIENDS

Several of the anthropologists who carried out Romanian fieldwork in the 1970s continued research into the 1980s. Now, though, they possessed greater knowledge of the society and language, more extensive connections, and a high degree of optimism about research possibilities. Yet, despite these more salutary conditions, research possibilities had changed drastically as an intensified culture of suspicion came to dominate relations between Western anthropologists and Romanian officials and some scholars. This renewed suspicion now causes long delays for foreign anthropologists in getting permission to consult archives or live in villages (if it arrives at all). Restrictions are also placed on their ability to conduct interviews or visit people without supervision, while greater numbers of locations and topics are off-limits.

Romanian officials and scholars meanwhile are more concerned that foreigners will abuse their privileged information and present hypercritical portraits of the country and that the foreign presence will be politically provocative and undermine national authority. Even officials and scholars who wish to go beyond the prevailing suspicion are constrained to do so (though they often apologize for the obstructions they erect). The extreme evolution of these patterns finally resulted in the recent expulsion of two anthropologists, one after incarceration and interrogation overnight in a provincial train station.

Scientific collaboration has also become difficult. Many Romanian colleagues are no longer available for consultation, and those who work with visiting scholars are regularly questioned by security forces and expected to provide lengthy written summaries of their conversations. Travel by Romanian scholars to foreign meetings, even those held in

of foreign publications. To give an idea of the restrictions on information flow, in the decade 1973–1983 the Romanian statistical annual shrank from 635 to 355 pages!

A number of factors relating directly to the evolving cold war explain this turnabout. Détente between Romania and the United States and the United States and the Soviet Union has evolved into tension, while tension between Romania and the Soviet Union has abated. Economically, Romania is more dependent on the Soviet Union and seems to have drawn closer to it in many policy positions (though the accident at Chernobyl may again change all that). Simultaneously, billion dollar debts to Western banks, severely restricted consumption, rationing, and increased labor demands have produced considerable social and political discontent in the country. In reaction, the regime is more repressive toward its own citizens and more xenophobic about foreign influences. United States-Romanian relations are increasingly strained due to these practices, United States criticism of human rights abuses, and Romanian bitterness about IMF repayment demands and related United States threats to withdraw most-favored-nation status.

The foreign researcher, now more nuisance than oddity, sits uneasily in the midst of this maelstrom. Anthropologists, with their strange requests, their desire to live among the people, and their informal methods, are perhaps the most bothersome of all. Thus, though Western anthropological research and publication about Romania remained fairly consistent, if slightly more critical, from the 1970s through the mid-1980s, the Romanian response to it was considerably intensified.

Two specific phenomena catalyzed this increasing Romanian disaffection. First, increased Romanian political and economic sensitivities heightened Romanian awareness of the critical nature of some of our publications and of the ways we presented our research results. Despite earlier articles of a similar tone which had appeared in Romanian journals and despite our soliciting Romanian criticisms of our work (e.g., Cobianu-Bacanu 1977; Costea 1976; Iordachel 1979), greater exception was now taken to these same articles. Moreover, great meaning was attributed by some Romanians to our presenting papers at conferences where Romanian cold war adversaries were prominent—in Budapest and Belgrade and before West European Romanian émigrés. Thus, we lost the label "friend" and became just another hostile force buffeting the Romanian state.

Second, our actual activities in Romania became subject to greater criticism and suspicion. As we learned the language and the ropes of Romanian society, met friends and colleagues outside controlled settings, and widened our social networks, our presence in Romania was less and less predictable. Similarly, our presence was viewed as a



greater potential source of ideological pollution at the same time foreign contacts throughout the state were being severely restricted.

Once symbols of détente in the 1970s, anthropologists in Romania in the 1980s have become trapped "in the cold." For this situation to change significantly we must possibly await United States-Soviet rapprochement combined with some chink in the Romanian-Soviet dyadic relation (again, Chernobyl comes to mind). More critically, we hope for the arrest of Romania's serious social, political, and economic decay for our own research interests but especially for the well-being of all the peoples in the Romanian state and for the advance of Romanian scholarship.

## CONCLUSIONS

Fieldwork in Eastern Europe is influenced by factors more complicated than just the East-West cold war. It is influenced by a variety of conflicts and their conjunctures over time which, depending on the way individual Eastern European nations are involved in them, either facilitate or neutralize anthropological research. These conditions transcend the particular problems of individual fieldworkers in Eastern Europe and demand the realization that the specific problems of the field have deep-seated structural causes based in international political economy.

Though understanding cold war effects on anthropological research is important, we also feel our discussion contributes to helping define the role anthropologists might play in the cold war. First, anthropology is uniquely suited to work toward diminishing cold war tensions precisely due to its nature that subjects it to such tensions in the first place. Since anthropological research produces in-depth understanding of Eastern European life, it is a natural counter to the rampant politico-centrism of West and East, locked in their multiple cold wars. The anthropologist's conduct and research activities in Eastern Europe and subsequent publication and dissemination of information about Eastern Europe must consciously try to bridge the gap in understanding and knowledge embodied in those same politico-centric views.

This is not to say that, in seeking to diminish cold war-based misconceptions, anthropologists should purposefully refrain from honestly examining socialist society "as it actually exists" (Bahro 1978) and developing informed critiques about it. We do not hold with the position that any criticism of socialist society only provides ammunition for the forces of reaction. Rather, in seeking a more just social order, we recognize the need to expose contradictions as the first step in their ultimate elimination. Thus, in-depth anthropological research

## Research in the Age of M.A.D.

also has the responsibility to enlighten about the concrete realities East European life—its achievements, its problems, and most important, the relations between the two.

Our goal for anthropology—to bridge cold war-inspired gaps understanding as well as to expose and criticize the contradictions Eastern European life—is also self-serving. As this chapter clearly dictates, anthropological research especially suffers "in the cold," though it thrives wondrously under conditions of détente. Simply this reason, anything we might do to identify sources of tension and injustice and reduce them should be a prime objective of our activities.

## NOTES

1. For an extended discussion of the nature of "mainstream" views Eastern European socialism by Western/American social scientists, see Cole 1985.
2. Most of the authors' research was part of a group project whose other members were: Sam Beck (marginal peasant communities, regional political economy); John W. Cole (village socioeconomic organization, domestic economy); Marilyn McArthur (ethnicity); and Steven Randall (domestic economy, mountain communities). For a more detailed discussion of the project, see Cole 1976 and Kideckel and Sampson 1984.
3. Other American anthropologists who carried out field research in Romania at the time include: Theresa Adams (prehistoric archaeology); Andreas Argyres (peasant economics); Joanne Bock (popular art); Regis Coussens (ritual and general expressive behavior); Diane Freedman (dance); Gail Kligman (ritual and symbolism); Joel Marrant (history and folk tradition); Erica McClure (sociolinguistics); Mitchell Ratner (education); Zdenek Salzmänn (Czech-speaking minority); and Katherine Verde (regional political economy).
4. Chris Hann (1987) quite accurately terms this skewed perspective "détente relativism."