BOSTON UNIVERSITY

Department of International Relations

Spring Semester 2015

Course Offering CLA IR 452/PO 539

TOPICS IN EUROPEAN POLITICS AND CULTURE:

CRITICAL MOMENTS AND MEMORY

Class Hours: Mondays 2-5pm
Location: IRB 102

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http://www.bu.edu/european

Office Hours: Mondays 11:30 am-12:30 pm. Wednesdays 2:00pm-4:00pm and by appointment
Course Description:
This course explores European politics through the lens of culture and memory, using interdisciplinary materials to consider major historical moments, including the Spanish Civil War, the Holocaust, the fall of the Berlin Wall and post-Communist transitions, the Balkans, as well as economic dislocations and immigrations. Sessions on each historical moment contain material from the arts (novels, poetry, film, and/or art), from the social sciences (history, sociology and/or political science) and philosophy to explore the moment and the changing memories of that moment over time.

Course Content:
This course had its genesis in a grant from the European Commission Delegation in Washington D.C. to Boston University’s Institute for Human Sciences and the Center for International Relations in the Department of International Relations in the College of Arts and Sciences in 2009. The grant, ‘EU for You,’ had a range of events including a high profile writers and artists series that brings in prominent European novelists, poets, and filmmakers for presentations and conversations. The course uses the tapes of a number of these events (found on BUniverse), along with the creative works of the artists in question. A subsequent grant for 2013-2014 has had a number of other events that will also be featured, in addition to the events of the Center for the Study of Europe. At the center of the course, however, are materials from a wide range of disciplines—literature, film, art, politics, history, sociology, and philosophy—that focus in on the course’s object of study: Critical Moments and Memory.

Critical moments, whether affecting large numbers of people in times of upheaval or individuals at crucial times in their lives, and memory, involving how they are remembered—and reinterpreted—over time, have been the subject of wide interest across disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. This is because memories of critical moments can change over time as individuals think about and rethink their experiences at the same time that subsequent generations may have different reactions to, and interpretations of, the memories of their parents and grandparents. How, why, and when such memories change have been the subject of literary and artistic representation or of visual performance as well as the topic of political and sociological investigation or philosophical discussion.

The course will focus on a number of major historical moments that have been the subjects of public interest and concerns as well as the objects of study in the humanities and social sciences. Sessions on each historical moment will contain material from the arts—fiction, poetry, film, and/or art—to engage with the critical moment and memory from the most personal of levels. It will also use material from the social sciences—history, sociology and/or political science—and philosophy to provide a more distanced
analysis of the moment, the memory, and the art that recreates and reinterprets the moment and memory.

The choice of historical moments is dictated not so much by the time period as by the memories that remain pertinent to contemporary European writers and artists. This is why we explore major historical moments like the Spanish Civil War for the Spaniards through novels, film, art, and literary history; WWII and the Holocaust for the Germans, the Austrians, the French, the Italians and, of course, the Jewish victims, through novels, film, philosophy, and history; May ’68 for the French by contrast with the Czechs through posters, photographs, political science, and historical commentary; and the Fall of the Berlin Wall for the East Germans and East Europeans through history, film, novels, poetry, and political science. We will also, however, explore the spillover effects of major economic transformations on Europe and how these relate to memories of migration and economic dislocation using novels and film as well as political science. Here, we consider contemporary East Europeans moving to the UK to find jobs; we discover post-1989 Italians’ travel to Albania to exploit Albanian dreams of American emigration; and Swedes’ collective memories of labor conflict and subsequent cooperation in the 1930s. Lastly, we explore more recent critical moments and memories with respect to the Balkans, and dreams of a European future.

The course design is deliberately multi-disciplinary. The questions asked, however, are primarily taken from the disciplinary perspective of political science and international relations. This means that class discussion will focus less, for example, on character development, literary style, and aesthetic value than on historical context, philosophical dilemmas, social and cultural impact, and political effects. The final paper is designed to have students bring together these multi-disciplinary materials in a sustained examination of a topic of interest to them focused on one or another of the critical moments considered in the course.

The course will add richness to the offerings of international relations and political science, by bringing in (seldom used) materials from across the humanities and social sciences. It is also a capstone course in the European Studies Major and Minor (see http://www.bu.edu/european ).

**COURSE OUTLINE:**
Introduction: How to Think about Critical Moments and Memory
1. Spanish Civil War and the Franco Era
2. World War II and the Holocaust
   a. Germany and Austria
   b. France, Italy, and Scandinavia
3. May ’68 in Paris and Prague
4. Fall of the Berlin Wall and Post-Communist Transitions
5. The Balkans: Reconstructions and Memories of Loss
6. Contemporary Issues: Immigration, Economic Dislocations and the EU
7. Class presentations of final papers
COURSE READINGS:
All the books are available in the bookstore: Barnes and Noble. They will also be on reserve in the library. Reading the works of fiction in the original language strongly recommended, where possible. In addition to the required books, there will be numbers of articles, essays, and excerpts from performances, podcasts, and the like—see the syllabus course outline and readings below. The books to be read in full are as follows:

Required (in bookstore):
Art, David *The Politics of the Nazi Past in Germany and Austria* New York: Cambridge Univ. Press 2006.
Atxaga, Bernardo *The Accordionist’s Son* Graywolf Press, 2009
Fallada, Hans *Alone in Berlin* Penguin, 2010
Fullbrook, Mary *Historical Theory: Ways of Imagining the Past* New York: Routledge, 2002
Galloway, Steven *The Cellist of Sarajevo*, 2004
Pettersson, Per *Out stealing horses* Graywolf Press, 2005
Ross, Kristin *May 68 and its Afterlives* Chicago: University of Chicago Press 2004
Schlink, Bernard *The Reader (Der Vorlese)* New York: Vintage, 2008
Tournier, Michel *The Ogre (Le Roi des Aulnes)* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1997
Wagner, Sarah *To know where he lies*, U of California Press, 2008

Recommended (in bookstore):
Harris, Robert *Fatherland* Random House, 1992
Nemirovsky, Irène *Suite Française* Knopf 2006
Suri, Jeremi *The Global Revolutions of 1968* Norton 2007
Cercas, Javier *Soldiers of Salamis* Bloomsbury Press, 2004

For list of films and other readings, see course assignments.
**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

This course will be run as a seminar. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with all the materials from each session and be prepared to discuss them, although they will not be expected to have fully engaged with all, given the amount. No laptops allowed in class, except when students have a presentation.

For written assignments, there will be two short papers out of three (worth 30 percent) and a final paper (worth 50 percent). The short papers should be around 1500 words, and each should be an in-depth discussion comparing materials from one section of the course—Spanish Civil War and the Holocaust; May 68 through the Fall of the Berlin Wall; Immigration through the Balkans and European Dreams. You should use the theoretical readings from the beginning of the course and the non-fictional ones throughout to lend insight into the fictional readings and film.

The final paper of 4000 words will be a research paper focused on a theme of interest related to critical moments and memory in any given period studied, but will also build on the analytic readings in the class, using them as tools for analysis.

In addition, four times in the semester, students should send an email the evening before class containing two to three questions for discussion about the materials for the week (worth 10 percent of the grade). The four emails containing two to three questions are intended to generate discussions about the readings around issues of interest to you.

Students will also provide one or two oral presentations plus a final report in class on their paper, attend class regularly, and participate in discussions (worth 10 percent). The oral presentation(s) will be a report based on readings from the syllabus and presented in class (10-15 minute presentation). In the last class of the course, students will give an oral presentation of the issues developed in their papers.

The College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) Dean’s Office has requested that you be informed of the following: The last day you may drop the course without a W grade is Feb. 24. The last day you may drop the course with a W grade is April 3. You are responsible for knowing the provisions of the CAS Academic Conduct Code (copies are available in CAS 105). Cases of suspected academic misconduct will be referred to the Deans’ Office.

Boston University is committed to providing equal access to our coursework and programs to all students, including those with disabilities. In order to be sure that accommodations can be made in time for all exams and assignments, please plan to turn in your accommodations letter as soon as possible after the first class, but no later than (ten days) from the first exam/assignment. After you turn in your letter, please meet with me to discuss the plan for accommodations so we can be sure that they are adequate and you are supported in your learning. If you have further questions or need additional support, please contact the Office of Disability Services ([access@bu.edu](mailto:access@bu.edu)), the Political Science advisor, Megan Winderbaum ([megmay@bu.edu](mailto:megmay@bu.edu)), or the Pardee School Advisor.
COURSE OUTLINE

Session 1: Jan 26

Introduction: How to Think about Critical Moments and Memory
Course Organization, Course Themes, and Class Discussion of the main questions to be addressed.


Richard Ned Lebow, Wulf Kansteiner, Claudio Fugu, (2006) The politics of memory in postwar Europe Chapter 1

Mary Fullbrook, Historical Theory: Ways of Imagining the Past New York: Routledge, 2002, pp. 1-50


***January 26, 9pm: Watch new documentary on HBO ‘Night will Fall’ which shows film footage from 1945 documentary shot by Alfred Hitchcock and Sidney Bernstein in 1945 about German concentration camps as it investigates why it was never released – with Helena Bonham Carter.

Session 2: Feb 2

1. Spanish Civil War and the Franco Era
   **Audiovisual podcast of Atxaga at BU (May 4, 2009): see BUniverse.
   Kostis Kornetis (2014): “Is there a future in this past?” Analyzing 15M’s intricate relation to the Transición, Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies, (Sept) find on ejournals or will email http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14636204.2014.938432

   Recommended novels:
   Javier Cercas, Soldiers of Salamis Bloomsbury Press, 2004

   Recommended films (try to watch at least one):
   “La Guerre Est Finie” Directed by Alain Resnais, with Yves Montand, Ingrid Thulin, Genevieve Bujold and Michel Piccoli—Director: Jorge Semprun 1966 (download from Netflix)
   Pan’s Labyrinth (El Laberinto del Fauno), DVD, Directed by Guillermo del Toro (2007; Belchite, Zaragoza, Aragón, Spain--demonstrated the individual memories
of the Fascists soldiers in support of Franco’s ideals during the war *(order from Netflix)*

“Los Girasoles Ciegos” (“Blind Sunflowers”), Lorenzo’s only memory of the Franco Era involved his father in constant hiding because of his radical Republican ideals that would bring him to his death if discovered. *(Rent from video store)*

Libertarias  See link to a movie about the women fighters in the Spanish civil war: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Libertarias, With Victoria Abril and Ana Belen.

2. World War II and the Holocaust

Session 3: Feb 9

a. Germany and Austria


*check out the German Propaganda Archive  http://research.calvin.edu/german-propaganda-archive/


*Required Film* on remembering (or not) the Holocaust in Germany

“The Nasty Girl” film ( Das Schreckliche Mädchen ) 1991 Starring: Barbara Gallauner, Elisabeth Bertram Director: Michael Verhoeven (order from Netflicks)

*Recommended Film*

Lars von Trier's "Europa" (1991)


"The Specialist" (1999) which is a fascinating documentary of the Eichmann Trial and a great companion to Hannah Arendt's book

"A Film Unfinished" (2010) -- which is an interesting film dealing with cinematic manipulation and the ability to change the way we look at historic images/memories.

And check out ‘Facing History and Ourselves,’ a high school project launched in Brookline on remembering a wide range of problematic issues of the past: http://www.facing.org/where-we-work

Session 4: Feb 17

Germany and Austria (continued)
**Videotape of Schlink’s discussion of the 60s generation memories and the problems of history  (Find on BUniverse)


**Recommended Readings:**
Browning, Christopher *Ordinary Men* Harper, 1998

**Recommended Films:**
The Reader with Kate Winslet, Ralph Fiennes; Director: Stephen Daldry.  2008 (Download on Netflix, Amazon video on demand, iTunes)

*Exodus*

*Schindler’s List*

*The Downfall* Eichinger and Hirshcbiegel

**First Paper due for session5**

Session 5: Feb 23

b. **France**

Tournier, Michel *The Ogre* (Le Roi des Aulnes) Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1997


**Required Film:** on remembering (or not) the Vichy period

**Recommended readings:**
Irène Nemirovsky, *Suite Française* Knopf 2006
André Malraux, *Anti-Mémoires* (English translation)?

**Recommended Film:**
Lucie Aubrac, *Women in the Resistance*

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Session 6:  Mar 2

c. Italy
	Fogu, Claudio, “Italiani Brava Gente: The Legacy of Fascist Historical Culture on Italian Politics of Memory” in *Politics of Memory* ed. Lebow, pp. 147-176

and Scandinavia
	Per Petterson, *Out stealing horses*  Graywolf Press, 2005

**Or Russia**
"Holocaust: Glue for Wallpaper?” (find on Amazon?)
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SVYoZWSI2CQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SVYoZWSI2CQ)
The documentary film focuses on the lack of Holocaust education among high school/university students in Russia. The film focuses on two college age sisters who appeared on a popular game show in Russia. When asked what was the Holocaust, they said they had never heard of it, and thought it was glue for wall paper. The video went viral in Russia, and the girls and the education system were widely criticized. The documentary film makers in an attempt to educate the girls pay for them to visit Auschwitz, where they get a full tour. This however, does not fully solve the education issue, and thousands of students remain ignorant.

**Required Films (watch two out of three):**
On the Italian Fascist period:
“*Garden of the Finzi-Contini.*” Italian film. Starring: Dominique Sanda, Lino Capolicchio  Director: Vittorio De Sica, 1971 (rent from local video store)
Lina Wertmüller's "*Seven Beauties*" ("Pasqualino Settebellezze")
On today with flashbacks:
“La Finestra di Fronte”  Italian film.  Starring: Giovanna Mezzogiorno, Massimo Girotti; Director: Ferzan Zpetek  2003  (order from Netflix, watch through Amazon video on demand)

**Recommended Films:**

- Cavani's "Night Porter" ("Il Portiere di Notte")
- *Life is Beautiful*
- *1900 (nove cento)* Bertolucci

**Session 7: Mar 16**

**3. May ’68 in Paris and Prague**

Posters of Paris, May ’68. (slideshow in class).

Check out websites: [http://www.art-for-a-change.com/Paris/paris.html](http://www.art-for-a-change.com/Paris/paris.html)  
[http://library.vicu.utoronto.ca/exhibitions/posters/index.htm](http://library.vicu.utoronto.ca/exhibitions/posters/index.htm)

Czech photographer: Josef Koudelka, Photographs of Prague, May ’68:

and use search mechanism for Prague Spring and Koudelka. (see also Paris May 1968)  
[www.magnumphotos.com](http://www.magnumphotos.com)

Download as pdf from Google Scholar or ejournals


See also:  
[http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/cohnbendit2/English](http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/cohnbendit2/English)


Parts II and III

**Recommended Readings:**


- Symposium in *Prospect* magazine on memories of May 68 at:  
[http://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/magazine/1968libertyoritsillusion1/](http://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/magazine/1968libertyoritsillusion1/) (or find through ejournals)

- Mavis Gallant, *Paris Notebooks*

- Milan Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, 1967

**Recommended film:**

- *La Chinoise*, Jean-Luc Godard, director; with Jean Pierre Léaud, Juliet Berto  (Order from Netflix)

- *A bientôt j’espère*, a documentary film by Chris Marker on a strike in 1967, harbinger of May 68:  
Les Amants Réguliers on May 68
"A Film Unfinished" (2010) -- which is an interesting film dealing with cinematic manipulation and the ability to change the way we look at historic images/memories

Burning Bush is a three-part mini-series created for HBO by world-renowned Polish director Agnieszka Holland. Based on real events and real characters, this drama focuses on the alarming deed of student Jan Palach who set himself on fire in a protest against the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1969.
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZIvshoNsY7g (trailer)

Session 8: Mar 23

4. Fall of the Berlin Wall and Post-Communist Transitions

Liliana Ursu, Romanian poet: Clips from interview and poetry reading, about forbidden words under Communism such as ‘loneliness’; see BUniverse
Confrontation in Romania, as young actor bares chest to police in act of defiance just days before fall of Ceausescu:
http://ro.wikibooks.org/wiki/Revolu%C5%A3ia_Rom%C3%A2n%C4%83_de_la_Cluj_%C3%AEn_imagini

Required Film:
Good-bye Lenin 2002 film-- Starring: Daniel Brühl, Katrin Saß Director: Wolfgang Becker (order from Netflix or buy from iTunes or rent from video store)
After the Wall: A World United—PBS film on the fall of the Berlin wall.
http://www.pbs.org/programs/the-wall/

Recommended Films:
Sonnenallee by Leander Haußmann - another great movie about the GDR!
Man of Iron (1981) directed by Andrzej Wajda. A fictional film documenting Solidarity's recognition as a legal party (filmed during the one year before martial law). It's interesting to see how the various characters choose to remember the roles they played under the communist regime and how they decide to identify themselves in what they hope will be a more open society.
*Alois Nebel a Czech film by Tomas Lunak Best foreign language film at the 84th Academy Awards 2012. Inspired by classic film noir and rendered in mesmerizing black-and-white rotoscope this dark-hearted Czech film traces the haunted memories and mysterious visions of a troubled train dispatcher through the shifting cultural and political landscape at the close of the Cold War. Alois Nebel is an isolated train dispatcher at a lonely station on the Czech-Slovak
border in the 80s. His life is quiet, disrupted only by the fog that occasionally rolls in and causes him to hallucinate ghosts from World War II. These horrors trouble him but when he meets a silent stranger, Alois begins a journey toward resolving his nightmares
(we will try to arrange of viewing for this film)

After the Wall: A World Divided—PBS film on the fall of the Berlin wall.
http://www.pbs.org/programs/the-wall/

Recommended Novel:
Peter Zilahy, The Last Window-Giraffe  New York: Anthem Press, 2008

(Second Paper due session 9)

Session 9: Mar 30
Esp. chapter 1, pp. 7-151.
Clip from Atila Bartis on his father’s arrest in Romania before moving to Hungary; (see on BUniverse)
Clip from Clemens Meyer, E German novelist, on skinheads and coming of age. (See on BUniverse)
Wolf Biermann and Marianne Birthler "The Party has a Thousand Eyes"  (See on BUniverse)  [Wolf Bierman: Poet, songwriter, essayist and former East German dissident. Marianne Birthler: Head of the state-funded body which manages the archives of the former East German secret police (Stasi).]
(Edinburgh: Museumsetc, 2009) (will email)

Required Films: East German response to the Fall of the Berlin Wall
The Lives of Others (Das Leben der Anderen) 2006 film--Starring: Martina Gedeck, Ulrich Mühe Director: Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck  (order from Netflix or buy from Amazon or rent from video store)
DAS SYSTEM  E German film on links between politicians, Stasi, and gas pipeline deal. (will arrange screening)

Recommended Novels:

Session 10: Apr 6
5. The Balkans: Reconstructions and Memories of Loss
Steven Galloway, The Cellist of Sarajevo  2004
And check out: Christmas Eve Sarajevo 12/24.
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W0oB8aS7DCs
And part of an interview explaining the inspiration
Sarah Wagner, *To know where he lies*, U of California Press, 2008

*General Mladic trials*, opening statements of the prosecution, with a clear explanation of what happened in Bosnia, and the history of Yugoslavia in order to understand the context. Starts at 6 minutes 30 seconds.  
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dTXtPxd9q0c&list=PL782C8F10C5478861&index=23&feature=plpp_video

**Required Film:**
*Snovi (Dreams): The Past is the Future, An Eternal Present* a film by Resad Kulenovic on the aftermath of the Serbian aggression  
http://www.snovifilm.com/home.html (will try to arrange viewing, with John Bernstein to introduce it)

**Recommended Readings:**
Bosnian bones and Spanish ghosts - On the Legal Shaping of Memory after Two Modern Conflicts.  
http://www.bosnianbonesspanishghosts.org/  
Mesa Selimovic, *Death and the Dervish* (a novel)

**Session 11: Apr 13**

**6. Contemporary Issues: Immigration, Economic Dislocations, and Fascist Anti-Immigration Discourse as Echoes of the Past**

Nicole Doerr, “Bonding or Bridging: Right Wing and Cosmopolitan Images of Immigrants.” *Mss* (will email)  
Wodak, Ruth and Richardson, John E. “European Fascism in Talk and Text.” Manuscript. (will email)

**Required Films:**
“*It’s a Free World*” British film about exploitation of immigrants in the UK  
Director: Ken Loach, 2007  (order from Amazon)

**Recommended Films and Readings:**
*Pane e Cioccolata* highlights immigration in Europe (before the EU)  
“*Lamerica*” Italian film set in Albania. Starring: Enrico Lo Verso, Michele Placido  
Director: Gianni Amelio 1994 (please rent from your video store)
HOP (2002) Belgian comedy on plight of African immigrants
http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0298911/
Monica Ali, Brick Lane
Zadie Smith, White Teeth

Third Paper due April 22

Session 12: Apr 22 *reschedule

7. The European Union

Required Films:
“L’Auberge Espagnole” a Cedric Klapisch film (order from Netflix, buy on Amazon)

Session 13: Apr 27
8. Class presentations of final papers for discussion

Papers due May 4 (email)