BOSTON UNIVERSITY
Department of International Relations

Spring Semester 2014
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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Office Hours: Mondays 11:30 am-12:30 pm. Wednesdays 2 pm-4:00 pm 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 contains 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. 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 will use the tapes of a number of these events, along with the creative works of the artists in question. But it will also use materials from a wide range of disciplines—literature, film, art, politics, history, sociology, and philosophy—to focus in on its object of study: Critical Moments and Memory.

Moreover, the BU Center for the Study of Europe has just received another ‘EU for You’ grant, and will have another series of speakers on European culture and politics. Some of these are indicated in the syllabus, i.e., the Irish Poetry series.

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 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 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 from major economic transformations in 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 intended to be a capstone course in the proposed, new European Studies Major and Minor, and a prototype of the kinds of capstone courses that will be developed across participating departments.
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 and Italy
3. May ’68 in Paris and Prague
4. Fall of the Berlin Wall and Post-Communist Transitions
5. Contemporary Immigration and Economic Dislocations
6. The Balkans: Reconstructions and Memories of Loss
7. Northern European Memories and European dreams
8. 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
Courtney Angela Brkic, The Stone Fields: Love and Death in the Balkans, Picador 2005
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
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
COURSE REQUIREMENTS
This course will be run as a seminar. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with through 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 two short papers should be 1000-1500 words, and should be in-depth discussions of materials about critical moments and memory from any two of three parts of the course, you choose which ones—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 class report on their paper (worth 10 percent), attend class regularly, and participate in discussions. 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. xx. The last day you may drop the course with a W grade is March xx. 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.
**Course Outline**

Session 1:

**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 Foug, (2006) *The politics of memory in postwar Europe* Chapter 1


[Link](http://scholar.google.com/scholar_url?hl=en&q=http://facweb.northseattle.edu/cscheuer/Winter%25202012/Engl%2520102%2520Culture/Readings/Hirsch%2520Postmemory.pdf&sa=X&scisig=AAGBfm1nx76HRPtEp2VmhV5apItkxK9Sw&oi=scholarr)

Session 2

1. **Spanish Civil War and the Franco Era**
   **Audiovisual podcast of Atxaga at BU (May 4, 2009):** see BUuniverse.

**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)](http://www.netflix.com/)

*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)*

2. **World War II and the Holocaust**

**Session 3**

**a. Germany and Austria**


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

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

**Recommended Film**

Lars von Trier's "Europa" (1991)

New film on Hannah Arendt and the Eichmann trial


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

**Session 4**

**Germany and Austria (continued)**


**Videotape of Schlink’s discussion of the 60s generation memories and the problems of history  (Find on BUiverse)**


**Recommended Readings:**

**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 session 5**

Session 5

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

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
Corner, Paul “Italian Fascism: Whatever Happened to Dictatorship? The Journal of Modern History, Vol. 74, No. 2 (June 2002), pp. 325-351 (download from ejournals)

**Required Films:**
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

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
[http://www.bu.edu/phpbin/buniverse/videos/view/?id=194](http://www.bu.edu/phpbin/buniverse/videos/view/?id=194)  See also:  
[http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/cohnbendit2/English](http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/cohnbendit2/English)

**Recommended Readings:**
Symposium in Prospect magazine on memories of May 68 at:
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)
*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=ZlvshoNsY7g (trailer)

Session 8

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

**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)

**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

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

Recommended Novel:
Milan Kundera The Unbearable Lightness of Being

Second Paper due  session 9
Session 9
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).]

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 Films:
Where were you son? Movie version of Tranquillity. Set in a large apartment in Hungary during the death throes of communism, obedient Andor lives with his eccentric mother, Rebeka, a once-celebrated stage actress-turned-recluse. After years of coexisting in a love-hate relationship marked by routine and possible incest, Andor brings home Eszter, a beautiful girl his own age. Opera director Robert Alfoldi renders this bizarre story in a melodramatic style, and veteran Hungarian stage star Dorottya Udvaros rises to the occasion.:
Session 10:

5. Contemporary Immigration and Economic Dislocations
   Nicol Doerr, “Bonding or Bridging: Right Wing and Cosmopolitan Images of Immigrants.” Mss (will email)
   Olivier Roy, Secularism confronts Islam Carnegie Council Interview Nov. 5, 2007
   http://www.carnegiecouncil.org/studio/transcripts/0010.html
   Savage, Timothy M. “Europe and Islam: Crescent Waxing, Cultures Clashing” The Washington Quarterly, Summer 2004 (find on ejournals, or on reserve)

Required Film:
   “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 Ciocciolata 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)
   “Dirty Pretty Things” Stephen Frears thriller about the extreme exploitation of immigrant workers in the UK
   HOP (2002) Belgian comedy on plight of African immigrants
   http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0298911/

   Monica Ali, Brick Lane
   Zadie Smith, White Teeth

Session 11

6. 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
   http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christmas_Eve/Sarajevo_12/24#Background_and_writi ng
   Courtney Angela Brkic, The Stone Fields: Love and Death in the Balkans, Picador 2005
   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.
**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)

**Third Paper due Session 12**

Session 12

7. **North European Collective Memories and European Myths**

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

Bo Rothstein, “The Transition from Trust to Mistrust” in *Social Traps and the Problem of Trust* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, chapter 8, pp. 167-200


**Required Film:**

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

**Session 13  Papers due**

Class presentations of final papers for discussion