

BOSTON UNIVERSITY

Department of International Relations

Fall Semester 2009

Course Offering CLA IR 452

TOPICS IN EUROPEAN POLITICS AND CULTURE

2009 TOPIC: **CRITICAL MOMENTS AND MEMORY**

Class Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:30 -11:00 am
Location: IRB 102

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IR 452 TOPICS IN EUROPEAN POLITICS AND CULTURE

Professor Vivien A. Schmidt

Course Description: Explores European politics through the lens of culture, using materials from literature, film, and the social sciences, including live sessions with European writers/artists.

Fall 2009 topic: Critical Moments and Memory in Europe, including the shadows cast by the Spanish Civil War, the Holocaust, the Cold War and post-Communist transitions, as well as economic dislocations and immigrations.

Instructor permission required, juniors and seniors only.

COURSE CONTENT:

This course has 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, has a range of events including a high profile writers and artists series that brings in prominent European novelists, poets, and film-makers for presentations and conversations. The course will use some of these events—whether video-tapes of past events or live performances and class interactions with visitors—as its focus. 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.

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. Finally, we explore critical moments and memories of a range of European writers with regard to personal and national histories, as well as their 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. Northern European Collective and Individual Memories
7. European dreams and critical memory
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:

- Arendt, Hannah *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* New York: Penguin 1994
- Art, David *The Politics of the Nazi Past in Germany and Austria*. New York: Cambridge Univ. Press 2006.
- Ash, Timothy Garton *The Magic Lantern: The Revolution of '89 Witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin, and Prague* New York: Vintage, 1993
- Atxaga, Bernardo *The Accordionist's Son* Graywolf Press, 2009
- Bartis, Atila *Tranquility* Archipelago Books, 2008
- Lebow, Richard Ned, Kansteiner, Wulf Fogu, Claudio *The politics of memory in postwar Europe* Duke University Press, 2006.
- Maier, Charles *The Unmasterable Past: History, Holocaust, and German National Identity* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998
- Orwell, George: *Homage to Catalonia*. San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1969
- 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
- Tremain, Rose, *The Road Home* Back Bay books, 2008

Recommended:

- Gustafsson, Lars *A Tiler's Afternoon* New Directions, 1993
- Harris, Robert *Fatherland* Random House, 1992
- Hughes, David *The Pork Butcher* New Amsterdam Books, 1990
- Malraux, André *Man's hope* Modern Library, 1984
- Marias, Javier *A Heart so White* New Directions, 2002
- Nemirovsky, Irène *Suite Française* Knopf 2006
- Pettersson, Per *Out stealing horses* Graywolf Press, 2005
- Sebald, W. G. *Austerlitz* Random House, 2001
- Suri, Jeremi *The Global Revolutions of 1968* Norton 2007

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This course will be run as a seminar. Students are expected to do all the readings and to be prepared to discuss them. Strongly recommended is attendance at all the evening events in the Contemporary Writers Series as well as for the Film Showings (generally one extra evening event a week, and well worth it). These will form an important part of class discussions as well.

There will be one short paper (worth 30 percent of the grade) and a final paper (worth 50 percent). Students will also be expected to provide one oral presentation in addition to a final class report on their paper (worth 10 percent), plus attend class regularly and participate in discussions and evening events (worth 10 percent of the grade). The short (5 to 7 page) paper may be an in-depth discussion of one of the sets of readings and/or it may involve the write-up and/or videotape of a 20 minute interview with one of the visitors (or a European of interest). The paper (20 to 25 pages) will be a research paper focused on a theme of interest to the student related to critical moments and memory. The oral presentation 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 Oct. 7. The last day you may drop the course with a W grade is Nov. 12. 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

(Sept 8) Class cancelled. Will be made up through evening events. But someone will be available in the classroom to distribute syllabi and answer questions.)

Session 1: (Sept. 15)

Introduction: How to Think about Critical Moments and Memory

Course Organization, Course Themes, and Class Discussion of the main questions to be addressed.

Pierre Nora, "General Introduction: Between Memory and History" in *Realms of Memory: The Constructions of the French Past* ed. Pierre Nora New York: Columbia University Press, pp. 1-20.

Lebow, Richard Ned, Kansteiner, Wulf Fogu, Claudio (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

Bo Rothstein, "Trust and Collective Memories" in *Social Traps and the Problem of Trust* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, chapter 8, pp. 167-200

Marianne Hirsch, "'The Generation of Postmemory'" *Poetics Today* 29,1 (Spring 2008), 103-128. <http://www.columbia.edu/~mh2349/publications.html>

***Film showing:** *Wednesday Sept. 16, 5:30-7:30* on the end of the Spanish Civil War "La Guerre Est Finie" Directed by Alain Resnais, with Yves Montand, Ingrid Thulin, Genevieve Bujold and Michel Piccoli— Director: Jorge Semprun 1966

***Contemporary Writers Special Event: Monday, Sept. 21, 7pm**

Simon Armitage, "Out of the Blue: Poetry and Redemption."

Boston University Photonics Center 8 St. Mary's Street, 9th floor

[Simon Armitage has published nine volumes of poetry including *Killing Time*, 1999 (Faber & Faber) and *Selected Poems*, 2001 (Faber & Faber) His most recent collections are *The Universal Home Doctor* and *Travelling Songs*, both published by Faber & Faber in 2002. He lives in West Yorkshire, UK.]

Session 2 (Sept. 22)

1. Spanish Civil War and the Franco Era

Orwell, George: *Homage to Catalonia*. San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1969

*Spanish novelist: Bernardo Atxaga, *The Accordionist's Son* Graywolf Press, 2009. Esp. pp. 181-259, 313-370

**Audiovisual podcast of Atxaga at BU (May 4, 2009): see BUiverse.

José Gonzalez "Spanish Literature and the Recovery of Historical Memory" *European Review*, Vol. 17, No. 1, (2009): 177-185

Guernica and Pablo Picasso (1881-1973): PBS: The Power of Art series, by Simon Schama. Buy it at <http://www.pbs.org/previews/simonschama-powerofart/> Or find it on YouTube in 7 parts. See especially parts 1, 6, and 7
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hsw612xRJjM>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oPuDiTu-OT8>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DyFiHgpdWKY>

Recommended:

André Malraux, *Man's hope* Modern Library, 1984
Javier Marias *A Heart so White* New Directions, 2002

***Film showing** *Wednesday Sept. 23, 5:30 to 7:30* on the remembering (or not) the Holocaust in Germany

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

2. World War II and the Holocaust

Session 3 (Sept. 29)

a. Germany and Austria

Charles Maier, *The Unmasterable Past: History, Holocaust, and German National Identity* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998

Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* New York: Penguin 1994

Kansteiner, Wulf, “Losing the War, Winning the Memory Battle: The Legacy of Nazism, World War II, and the Holocaust in the Federal Republic of Germany, in *Politics of Memory* ed. Lebow, pp. 102-147

Uhl, Heidemarie “From Victim Myth the Co-Responsibility Thesis: Nazi Rule, World War II, and the Holocaust in Austrian Memory” in *Politics of Memory* ed. Lebow, pp. 40-72

***Film Showing** *Sept. 29, 5:30-9:30 pm* on remembering (or not) the Vichy period

“*The Sorrow and the Pity.*” French film. Starring: Georges Bidault, Maurice Chevalier, R. Du Jonchay, and Anthony Eden; Director: Marcel Ophüls, 1972

***Contemporary Writers Special Event: Monday Oct. 5, 7pm**

Kieron Winn: "There lives the dearest freshness deep down things..."

Barrister's Hall, Boston University School of Law, 765 Commonwealth Av, 1st floor
[Kieron Winn is a freelance teacher and poet. His poems have appeared in *Poetry Review*, *The Spectator*, and on BBC1. He lives in Oxford, UK.]

Session 4 (Oct. 6)

David Art, *The Politics of the Nazi Past in Germany and Austria*. New York: Cambridge Univ. Press 2006 (especially Introduction and Chapter 1, pp. 1-48).

*German writer: Bernard Schlink, *The Reader* (Der Vorlese) New York: Vintage, 2008 (and go see the film!!!)

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

Marianne Hirsch, "Surviving Images: Holocaust Photographs and the Work of Postmemory," *Yale Journal of Criticism* (Spring 2001); rpt. in *Visual Culture and the Holocaust*, ed. Barbie Zelizer (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press "Depth of Field" series, 2001).

Gavriel D. Rosenfeld, *Munich and Memory: Architecture, Monuments, and the Legacy of the Third Reich* University of California Press, 2000 (Chapters 1, 5, 9, pp. 1-48, 143-74, 229-59).

Recommended Readings:

W. G. Sebald, *Austerlitz* Random House, 2001

Robert Harris, *The Fatherland* Random House, 1992

***Contemporary Writers Special Event: Thursday October 15, 6pm**

Ulrike Ottinger, "Visual Voyages"

Off campus: Goethe Institut Boston, 170 Beacon Street

[Event with German multimedia artist Ulrike Ottinger, who works in films, photographs, and artifacts; and whose critical approach is at the intersection of feminism, ethnographic studies, and concepts of the national and the global. She offers a visually enthralling examination of some of the stranger and more wonderful aspects of contemporary popular culture and diverse ethnic cultural heritages.]

***Film Showing: Tuesday Oct. 20, 5:30-7:30** on the Italian Fascist period

"*Garden of the Finzi-Contini*." Italian film. Starring: Dominique Sanda, Lino Capolicchio Director: Vittorio De Sica, 1971

Session 5 (Oct. 20)

b. France and Italy

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

Philippe Burin, "Vichy" in *Realms of Memory: The Constructions of the French Past* ed. Pierre Nora New York: Columbia University Press, pp. 181-202

Pierre Birnbaum, "Grégoire, Dreyfus, Drancy, and the Rue Copernic: Jews at the Heart of French History" in *Realms of Memory: The Constructions of the French Past* ed. Pierre Nora New York: Columbia University Press, pp. 379-423

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

Recommended readings:

David Hughes, *The Pork Butcher* New Amsterdam Books, 1990

Irène Nemirovsky, *Suite Française* Knopf 2006

Session 6 (Oct. 27)

3. May '68 in Paris and Prague

Posters of Paris, May '68. Check out websites: <http://www.art-for-a-change.com/Paris/paris.html>

<http://library.vicu.utoronto.ca/exhibitions/posters/index.htm>

Czech photographer: Josef Koudelka, Photographs of Prague, May '68: exhibit NYC and Boston? See Magnum site for photo essay:

<http://inmotion.magnumphotos.com/essay/invasion> and

http://www.magnumphotos.com/Archive/C.aspx?VP=Mod_ViewBoxInsertion.ViewBoxInsertion_VPage&R=2K7O3R1Z99FF&RP=Mod_ViewBox.ViewBoxThumb_VPage&CT=Album&SP=Album

Aristide Zolberg, "Moments of Madness" *Politics and Society* 1972 vol. 2.

Download as pdf from Google Scholar

Marcel Gauchet, "Right and Left" in *Realms of Memory: The Constructions of the French Past* ed. Pierre Nora New York: Columbia University Press, pp. 241-298

**German-French leader of May '68 in Paris: Daniel Cohn-Bendit, "The Legacy of 1968." Talk at the Institute for Human Sciences. See at Buniverse:

<http://www.bu.edu/phpbin/buniverse/videos/view/?id=194> See also:

<http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/cohnwendit2/English>

Jacques Rupnik, "1968: A year of two Springs" *Transit* no. 35, 2008. Access at:

<http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2008-05-16-rupnik-en.html>

Symposium in *Prospect* magazine on memories of May 68 at: [http://www.prospect-](http://www.prospect-magazine.co.uk/article_details.php?id=10164)

[magazine.co.uk/article_details.php?id=10164](http://www.prospect-magazine.co.uk/article_details.php?id=10164) [http://www.prospect-](http://www.prospect-magazine.co.uk/article_details.php?id=10166)

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Kristin Ross, *May 68 and its Afterlives* Chicago: University of Chicago Press 2004

Recommended Readings:

Jeremi Suri, *The Global Revolutions of 1968* Norton 2007

***Contemporary Writers Special Event: Wednesday, October 28, 2009, 7:00 PM**

[Wolf Biermann](#) and [Marianne Birthler](#) "The Party has a Thousand Eyes"

Boston University Photonics Center 8 St. Mary's Street, 9th floor

[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).]

Session 7 (Nov. 3)

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

Timothy Garton Ash, *The Magic Lantern: The Revolution of '89 Witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin, and Prague* New York: Vintage, 1993

Orla-Bukowska, Annamaria, "New Threads on an Old Loom: National Memory and Social Identity in Postwar and Post-Communist Poland, pp. 177-209.

** Liliana Ursu, Romanian poet: Clips from interview and poetry reading, about forbidden words under Communism such as 'loneliness' ; see BUiverse

* Atila Bartis, Hungarian/Romanian novelist: *Tranquility* Archipelago Books, 2008. Esp. chapter 1, pp. 7-151.

**Clip from Atila Bartis on his father's arrest in Romania before moving to Hungary; see BUiverse

**Clip from Clemens Meyer, E German novelist, on skinheads and coming of age. See BUiverse

***Contemporary Writers Special Event: Thursday, November 5, 2009, 7pm**
Tomaz Salamun "(Dis)locations: Poetry and Place"

[Tomaz Salamun is considered Slovenia's greatest living poet and one of the foremost figures of the Eastern European poetical avant-garde, Tomaz Salamun is revered by many American poets for his unique surrealistic style. His most recent collection in English is *The Book for My Brother* (Harcourt, 2006, translated by Christopher Merrill and others)]

Session 8 [Nov. 10 cancelled, with 2 films to replace it]

***Film Showing:** *Tuesday, Nov. 10, 5:30-7:30pm*, an East German response to the Fall of the Berlin Wall

Good-bye Lenin 2002 film-- Starring: Daniel Brühl, Katrin Saß Director: Wolfgang Becker

***Film Showing:** *Thursday Nov. 12, 5:30-7:30pm*, an East German experience pre and post 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

Session 9 (Nov. 17)

5. Contemporary Immigration and Economic Dislocations

Rose Tremain, *The Road Home* Back Bay books, 2008

Klaus J. Bade, "Legal and Illegal Immigration into Europe: Experiences and Challenges, *European Review* (2004), **12:3:339-375** (download from ejournals)

"*Lamerica* Italian film set in Albania. Starring: Enrico Lo Verso, Michele Placido Director: Gianni Amelio 1994 (please rent from your video store)

***Film Showing:** *Thursday November 19, 5:30-7:30pm*

"*Free World*" British film about exploitation of immigrants in the UK Director: Ken Loach, 2007

Session 10: (Nov. 24)

6. North European Collective and Individual Memories

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

Norwegian writer: Per Petterson, *Out stealing horses* Graywolf Press, 2005

Swedish writer: Lars Gustafsson, *A Tiler's Afternoon* New Directions, 1993

Session 11 (Dec 1)

7. European dreams and critical memory

+Slovenian writer: Ales Debeljak *Twilight of Idols: The Tragedy of Yugoslavia and Individualism*

+Ales Debeljak, "Elusive common dreams: The perils and hopes of a European identity" <http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2001-08-28-debeljak-en.html>

Spanish film-maker and novelist: Jorge Semprun, "What Being a European Means to Me" *Open Democracy* www.opendemocracy.net/people-debate-36/article_322.jsp

***Film Showing:** *Wednesday Dec. 2, 5:30-7:30pm* on the contemporary European student experience

"*Auberge Espagnole*" a Cedric Klapisch film

***Contemporary Writers Special Event:** Thursday, Dec. 3, 7pm

Krzysztof Wodiczko "Critical Vehicles"

Krzysztof Wodiczko was born in Warsaw, Poland, and lives and works in New York and Cambridge. Since 1980, he has created more than seventy large-scale slide and video projections of politically-charged images on architectural façades and monuments worldwide. By appropriating public buildings and monuments as backdrops for projections, Wodiczko focuses attention on ways in which architecture and monuments reflect collective memory and history.

Session 14 (Dec. 8)

Class presentations of final papers for discussion