Course objectives

Europe is now often praised as a model case of how to overcome nationalism and war through inter-state cooperation and cultural tolerance. Yet, at the same time, the struggle to come to terms with the legacies of a ‘dark continent’ (Mark Mazower) has continued to this very day. This course engages with one of the core questions of this struggle: collective memory. The first part of the course introduces a range of key issues in the study of collective memory such as the relationship between individual and collective memory, as well as the debates about memories’ persistence and change, and the salience of memory politics. In the second and third part of the course, we turn to the empirical patterns of how Europe’s ‘dark legacies’ have left their traces in collective memories across the continent, paying equal attention to fascism and World War II on the one hand, and communism on the other hand. The analysis combines comparisons between countries and European sub-regions with a more detailed focus on specific vectors of memory such as history writing, commemoration practices and film.

By the end of the course students will be able to:

1) Appreciate the importance of ‘dark legacies’ for the development of European societies after 1945
2) Engage with theoretical concepts and debates in the study of collective memory
3) Discuss similarities and differences in how Europe’s fascist and communist past has been confronted across the continent

Course Requirements

1. Attendance and active participation in class discussions (20 % of final grade).
2. Seminar presentation (20 % of final grade)
3. Two short critiques of readings (30 % of final grade)
4. Final Paper (30 % of final grade).
Course Outline and Readings

Seminar 1: Introduction (Overview of course, assignment of seminar presentations)

PART I: General issues and concepts

Seminar 2: Collective and individual memory

Zerubavel, Eviatar (1996), "Social memories: steps to a sociology of the past", *Qualitative Sociology* 19 (3): 283-300

Seminar 3: Persistence and change


Seminar 4: Collective memory and politics


Seminar 5: Collective memory and 'dark legacies': Amnesia, trauma, denial


Seminar 6: Historical Context (I): Fascism and World War II

Seminar 7: Historical Context (II): Communism


PART II: Coming to terms with dark legacies in Western and Eastern Europe

Seminar 8: World War II and fascism in West European collective memory (I): Germany


Seminar 9: World War II and fascism in West European collective memory (II): Italy


Seminar 10: World War II and fascism in West European collective memory (III): France


Seminar 11: Communism and West European collective memory


Seminar 12: Dark legacies in Central Eastern Europe (I)


**Seminar 13:** Dark legacies in Central Eastern Europe (II): The case of Hungary

Excursion to ‘Terrorhaza’ museum

**Seminar 14:** Dark legacies in the former Soviet Union


**Seminar 15:** Dark legacies in the former Soviet Union (cont.)


**PART III: Coming to terms with Europe’s dark legacies: Vectors of memory**

**Seminar 16:** Transitional justice


James McAdams (1996), The Honecker Trial. The East German Past and the German Future, Kellog Institute for International Studies, Working paper #216

**Seminar 17:** Commemoration (I)


Apor, Peter (2010), ‘Eurocommunism: Commemorating Communism in Contemporary Eastern Europe’, in Malgorzata Pakier and Bo Strath (eds.), *A European Memory?*

Seminar 18: Commemoration (II): Case study Hungary

Excursion to monuments around Szabadsag ter

Seminar 19: History writing and teaching (I)


Seminar 20: History writing and teaching (II)


Seminar 21: Film


Seminar 22: Towards Europeanization of Europe’s ‘dark legacies’?


Seminar 23: Conclusion