Introduction

This course explores the interaction among nationalism, culture, and politics in twentieth-century Spain and Yugoslavia. Special attention is paid to the politics of late state-building, the rise of competing nationalisms, civil wars and their legacies, dictatorship, collective memories, democratic transition (Spain), and state collapse (Yugoslavia). We will study these issues by integrating sociological and historical material with literary works and visual materials (feature and documentary films). The course will be comparative not only in a thematic sense—combining Spain and Yugoslavia—but also from a disciplinary perspective, combining sociology and history with literary approaches and the study of culture.

The twentieth-century histories of Spain and Yugoslavia parallel each other in important ways. Both countries were historically on the political-economic (not only geographic) periphery of Europe. Both are nation-states whose unity has long been undermined by strong competing nationalisms that cut across and complicated severe political differences. Both countries lived through a violent civil war—Spain in 1936-39, Yugoslavia in 1941-45—that led to long-term dictatorial regimes identified with a single, authoritarian leader (Spain’s Franco and Yugoslavia’s Tito). In both countries, the legitimacy of the regime was rooted in the figure of the charismatic leader, so that the leader’s death led to a legitimacy crisis and, ultimately, a democratic transition (Spain) or state dissolution (Yugoslavia). In both cases, authoritarian rule managed temporarily to suppress the tensions that had led to civil war without resolving the historical traumas and collective memories of different political factions and ethnic groups. As a result, in both societies the end of the dictatorship resulted in a dramatic “return of the repressed,” albeit with very different consequences.

These differences between Spain and Yugoslavia make the comparison between the two countries exceedingly interesting. Most obviously, Franco was a right-wing dictator, first identified with fascism and later with anti-communist traditionalism, while Tito was a
left-wing anti-Stalinist. A second important difference concerns the contrast between Spain’s unitary state and Yugoslavia’s socialist federalism. Thirdly, Spain’s transition to democracy was relatively successful while Yugoslavia’s post-dictatorial trajectory was disastrous. Spain today is a prosperous nation-state with a functioning democracy in a parliamentary monarchy; Yugoslavia, after years of internal violence and external intervention, has ceased to exist as a unified state, while its former republics are still struggling to enter the European Union. Why did two societies that shared many historical similarities end up following such different paths? This central question will be explored through an analysis of the long-term historical legacies of state and nation-building, civil wars, the dictatorial regimes that were established in their aftermath, and the clash between official regime ideologies and collective memories.

Required Books


*Note:* All other readings can be found on the designated Blackboard site for this class under the heading “course documents.”

Course requirements and regulations:

- Attendance at all class sessions is mandatory. Any *unexcused* absence over 2 will lower the participation grade by 5 % (i.e., half a letter grade).
- Active class participation.
- Email and Blackboard will be the preferred medium for announcements, questions, and assignments.
- Students are expected to have *read the assigned texts* by the day indicated on the syllabus and be prepared to participate in class discussion. *Responses on the Bb discussion board*, when assigned, need to be posted by 8 p.m. on Wednesday evenings. Students are expected to read all the posts prior to class; they are invited but not obliged to respond to each other’s comments.
- Students are expected to attend all out-of-class *film and documentary screenings* (generally scheduled for Mondays, 8.30 p.m.). For those unable to
attend the scheduled showings, all videos and DVDs will be placed on reserve in the library.

- **Three papers**: a midterm paper (5-6pp), a second paper (6-7pp), and a final paper (8-10pp.)

### Evaluation

The final class grade will be broken down as follows:

- Attendance and participation: 15%
- Discussion board postings: 20%
- Midterm paper (5-6pages): 15%
- Second paper (6-7pages): 20%
- Final paper (8-10 pages): 30%

### Honor Code

This course and all its assignments are covered by the Oberlin College honor code. This means, most importantly, that—unless otherwise indicated—you are to produce your own work and honor the rules and conventions of scholarly quotation, attribution, and citation. While you are allowed to ask advice and help from librarians and official writing tutors, you are, in the end, to submit work produced by you. Some assignments may be collaborative in nature; those will be clearly identified as such. Any case of (suspected) plagiarism will be reported to the Honors Committee. For more details, see [www.oberlin.edu/students/student_pages/honor_code.html](http://www.oberlin.edu/students/student_pages/honor_code.html)

### COURSE SCHEDULE

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<th>Week One: What is Nationalism?</th>
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<td>Tues 2/5 Introduction to the course and syllabus</td>
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<td>Thurs 2/7 Nationalism (1)</td>
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<th>Week Two: Nationalism and Culture</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tues 2/12 Nationalism (2)</td>
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<td>Thurs 2/14 Cultural Nationalism</td>
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<td>• Discussion Board entry 1</td>
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Week Three. Contested Nationhood: State and Nation-Building in Spain

Tues 2/19 Contested Nationhood, Language, and Nationalism

Thurs 2/21 Spanish (lack of) unity and cultural identity
- Ramón Menéndez Pidal, *The Spaniards in their History*, pp. 119-137; 177-180; 192-199; 202-203.
- *Discussion Board entry 2*

Week Four: The Civil War in Spain


Tues 2/26 The Second Spanish Republic and the Civil War

Thurs 2/28 Literature and Politics in the Civil War
- Selection of pro-Nationalist literature from Kenwood, *The Spanish Civil War*.
- *Discussion Board entry 3*
Week Five: From Empires to Nations in the South Slavic Lands: A literary account

Tues 3/4  The Imperial Legacy and the South Slavs
  • Ivo Andrić, *The Bridge on the Drina*, pp.1-93, 113-144.

Thurs 3/6  Modernization and the emergence of nationalism

First paper, 5-6 pp. (due Sunday 3/10, midnight)

Week Six: Contested Nationhood: Nation-Building in Interwar Yugoslavia

Tues 3/11  The Evolution of the Yugoslav Idea

Thurs 3/13  Small Nation Nationalisms in Multinational State: Three literary views
  • Miroslav Krleža, “A Form of Prologue or Sentimental Variations on the Blitvinian Question through the Ages,” in *Banquet in Blitva*, pp. 1-13.
  • Discussion board entry 4

Week Seven: From Occupation and Civil War to Socialist Yugoslavism

Tues 3/18  The Yugoslav Civil War and its Traumatic Legacy
Thurs 3/20  “Brotherhood and Unity,” Ethnic Federalism, and Socialist Yugoslavism

****SPRING BREAK****

**Week Eight: Leaders, Dictators, Regimes: Franco and Tito**

[FILM]  Excerpt: Goran Marković, *Tito and Me*

Tues 4/1  Tito, Titoism, Yugoslavism

Thurs 4/3  Francoism
•  Second Paper Assignment Given Out (paper due April 22)

**Week Nine: Civil wars through culture and representation: From Francoism to Democratic Transition in Spain**

Tues 4/8  Representations of the Civil War: Francoism
**Thurs 4/10**  The Civil War as Collective Insanity: Historical Memory and the Spanish Transition
- Aguilar, *Memory and Amnesia*, pp. 149-152, 162-166, 183-196, 208-211, 260-264, 265-270)
- *Discussion Board entry 5*

**Week Ten: Breaking the Pact of Silence**

**[FILM]**  *Vacas* (Julio Medem, 1992)

**Tues 4/15**  The Basque Problem: National Identifications, Violence, etc.
- Discuss *Vacas*, relate to Basque identity as discussed by Linz.
- Cercas, pp. 1-100

**Thurs 4/17**  Reconciliation and Memory through Storytelling or Law? Developments since 2000
- Javier Cercas’s *Soldiers of Salamis*, pp. 100-224.

*Second paper (5-6pp.) due Sunday, April 22 (midnight)*

**Week Eleven: The Unraveling of Yugoslav Identity**

**[FILM]**  *Yugoslavia. Death of a Nation* (aka *Death of Yugoslavia*; BBC, Nicholas Fraser, 1995)

**Tues 4/22**  The Decline of Yugoslavism and the Crisis of the Multinational State

**Thurs 4/24**  The War in Slovenia and Croatia
Week Twelve: The Civil War, Yugoslavism, and Collective Memory

[FILM]  
*Underground* (Emir Kusturica, 1995)

Tues 4/29  
The Bosnian Catastrophe: War, Ethnic Cleansing, and International Intervention  

Thurs 5/1  
Historical Memory, the Failure of Yugoslavism, and “Yugo-nostalgia”  
- Discuss *Underground*  

Week Thirteen: Yugoslavia and Spain: Memory, Restitution, Lessons

Tues 5/6  
Yugoslavia. Lessons, War Crimes, and International Justice  

Thurs 5/8  
Spain: *El Estado de las Autonomías*  

**FINAL PROJECT (8-10PP.) DUE: FRIDAY, MAY 16, 7PM**