

**Nationalism, Culture and Politics Under and After Dictatorship:
Spain and Yugoslavia in the 20th Century
(HISP 340, SOCI 340) TR 3:00-4:15, King 243**

Veljko Vujačić
Dept. of Sociology
King 305a x85444
Mailbox: King305
Office hours: Tu, 12.30-2, Thur. 1-2.30
E-mail: veljko.vujacic@oberlin.edu

Sebastiaan Faber
Dept. of Hispanic Studies
404 Peters, x58189
Mailbox: 301 Peters
Office hrs: T, W, Th., 9:30-10:30 a
Email: sebastiaan.faber@oberlin.edu

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 (he came to power thanks to Hitler and Mussolini) 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.

The class is roughly divided into three parts. In Part One (weeks 1-4), we will concentrate on theories of nationalism and provide the historical background on state and nation-building in Spain and Yugoslavia. In part two (weeks 5-8), we will examine the Spanish and Yugoslav civil wars, the establishment of dictatorial regimes, and their official ideologies. Finally, in part three (weeks 9-13), we will focus on collective memories of civil wars, the unraveling of Yugoslav identity and the civil war in Yugoslavia, the successful transition to democracy in Spain, the post-Yugoslav debris, and recent debates about the legacy of the Spanish civil war and Francoism. Throughout the course students will be exposed to a variety of sources and perspectives on the troubled history of these two countries.

Required Books:

- Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983. ISBN: 9781405134422
- Aguilar, Paloma. *Memory and Amnesia: The Role of the Spanish Civil War in the Transition to Democracy*. New York: Berghahn, 2002. ISBN 1571814965.
- Graham, Helen. *The Spanish Civil War: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford UP, 2005. ISBN 0192803778.
- Cercas, Javier. *Soldiers of Salamis*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2004. ISBN 1582344728.
- Andrew Baruch Wachtel, *Making a Nation, Breaking a Nation: Literature and Cultural Politics in Yugoslavia*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998. ISBN 0-8047-3181-0.
- Pavlowitch, Stevan, *Tito: A Reassessment*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1992. ISBN 0814206018
- Ivo Andrić, *The Bridge on the Drina*. University of Chicago Press, Phoenix Fiction Series, ISBN: 978-0-226-02045-7 (paper)
- Chuck Sudetic. *Blood and Vengeance: One Family's Story of the War in Bosnia*. New York: Penguin, 1999. ISBN: 0140286810.

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*** need to be posted **by 8 p.m. on the day before the class is taught**. 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 deposit any *written assignments* in the digital drop box before the beginning of class (and to bring a printed copy to class).
- Students are expected to attend all out-of-class film and documentary showings (Generally scheduled for **Sunday, 4-7 p.m.**). For those unable to attend the scheduled showings, all videos and DVDs will be placed on reserve in the library.
- Two take-home quizzes, one mid-term paper (7-8 pages), one final paper (10-12 pages).

Evaluation

The final class grade will be broken down as follows:

- Attendance and participation: 15%
- Written assignments and discussion board postings: 15%
- Two take-home quizzes: 20%
- Midterm paper (7-8pages): 20%
- Final paper (10-12 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