

European Memory and Identity: France

European Culture and History Core Course

DIS 3 Credit Course

Fall 2011



Without a story that we can tell about ourselves, there is no identity

Aleida Assmann

This ECH core course explores European history and culture by focusing on memory and identity: How have selective ways of remembering Europe's past, its rich heritage and centuries of bloodshed, shaped collective and individual identities? What does it mean to be French, and what does it mean to identify as a European – in the past and today? The issue of identity will be addressed on several levels: the individual, the regional, the national, and the European.

This section of the course will both use Danish and French society as case studies to unravel the complex web of historical remembering, identity formation, and the construction of the nationality. The course combines contemporary humanities with a study of historical developments read as narratives constructed by memory. Memory is constituted by communication – remembering is as much a social as an individual process. Furthermore, the course sets out to examine how identity is drawn from and shaped by certain repositories of memory and meaning: landscapes and cityscapes, art and architecture, literature and film. These expressions of culture will be explored in relation to specific case studies: How do memorials, museums and historic buildings offer perspectives on the past? How have French movies dealt with the divisive memory of the Second World War and its unique status as both a resisting and a collaborating nation? How does France deal with its history as a colonial power and the scars left when the empire fell apart.

This interdisciplinary approach enables students to compare and contrast various European nations and cultures in different epochs.

As a part of these case studies, students will travel with faculty through western Denmark and France to gain first-hand experience of the themes discussed in class.

Study tour destinations

Paris

We will spend the first four nights in Paris: The French 19th century historian, Jules Michelet put it this way: *Paris conquered France: and France the world*. Paris is not the world's most visited city for nothing. The history of France has for the most part been made in Paris, and the *national memory sites* are numerous. As an introduction to the city, we will take you on a guided tour by bus to the main historical sites.

World War I battlefields, Verdun, Lorraine

The battle of Verdun in 1916 is regarded in France as the one battle that sums up the terrible sacrifice of World War I. Due to the soldier's memories, it became a national experience, as this saying reveals: *Anyone who was not at Verdun was not in the war*. After the war, memorials were created, not only in Verdun, but all over France. There is not a city in France without a "Rue de Verdun".

Reims in Champagne

Reims mainly owes its role as a site of national memory to its cathedral, where the anointing and coronation of the French Kings took place during centuries. The cathedral itself is a magnificent example of early Gothic architecture and, as such, listed on UNESCO's World Heritage List. But, as the capital of Champagne, Reims, is of course also famous for its champagne cellars. Champagne is regarded as the French wine par excellence and has been associated with the French national *spirit*, as it is clearly expressed in this quote from a book on Champagne from the late 19th Century: *The wine resembles us, it is made in our image: it sparkles like our intellect; it is lively like our language*.

More details on the content of the tour program will follow.

Course Objectives

- To explore crucial dimensions in the modern history of both Denmark, France, and of Europe as a whole.
- To enable you to understand how identities both have been expressed as well as influenced by literature, monuments, museums, art, movies, music, etc.
- To gain general knowledge on the history and culture of Europe and see how processes of remembering and forgetting have informed and also continue to shape current identities.
- To learn to be an active traveller through the academic and cultural aspects of the study tour.

Course Format

This section will meet 18 times during the semester and additional educational time will take place as students travel with faculty through Denmark and France. The 18 sessions will be a mix of classroom teaching and joint sessions, mandatory for all three sections, regardless the destination of your course.

Meeting Times and Location

Monday and Thursday 8:30-9:50 in Room 23-401

Course Instructor

Ditte Marie Egebjerg

Cand. Mag. in Nordic Literature and French, University of Copenhagen 2001. BA studies in French Literature (*Licence*), Paul Valéry University, Montpellier, France. Vice Consul at the Royal Danish Consulate of Ethiopia 1999-2000. Educator in Danish Language and Culture at Mærsk, Novo Nordisk and other Danish Companies 2001-2006. With DIS since 2006.

Email: ditte_egebjerg@hotmail.com

In addition to regular meetings with your instructor, some class sessions will be guest lecturers with all ECH core courses that provide a European framework to view French issues.

Course Requirements

Written exams will be held before and after the study tour to France. These tests will relate to class readings done throughout the semester as well as class and joint lectures.

Each student will be assigned a time to give an oral presentation to the class while on the long study tour that will reflect a particular aspect or academic interest related to the tour destination.

Each student will produce a research project in form of a topic paper that reflects the theme of memory and identity from one of a range of disciplines: history, art history, philosophy, literature, or cultural studies. Students work on this project throughout the semester as the topic paper is to be handed in at the end of the semester for the closing seminar.

A map assignment will be given at the end of session 9. Students are to hand in the assignment in session 10 before the long study tour.

Short reading assignments may be given along the way for students to summarize the readings they are working through.

A picture assignment will be assigned prior to going on the long study tour. The assignment covers the long study tour and is due when the class returns to Copenhagen in session 11.

More information on all assignments is provided in class and in the course specific syllabus handed out at the beginning of the semester.

Grade Components

Pre tour exam	30 %
Map assignment:	5 %
Oral presentation:	10 %
Photo assignment:	5 %
Post tour assignment	10 %
Research paper	30 %
Class and tour participation:	10 %

Readings:

Assmann, Aleida: Remembrance and Memory.

<http://www.goethe.de/ges/pok/dos/dos/ern/kug/en3106036.htm>

Jansen, Jan: Memory as a Social Phenomenon – Core Concepts in Memory Studies.

<http://www.goethe.de/ges/pok/dos/dos/ern/kug/en2984071.htm>

Ètienne Balibar: from The Nation Form: History and Ideology. In: Theories of Memory. A Reader.

Confino, Alon: Remembering the Second World War, 1945-1965: Narratives of Victimhood and Genocide. *Cultural Analysis* 4 (2005), 46-75.

Lebow, Richard Ned, Wulf Kansteiner, Claudio Fogu (eds.): The Memory of Politics in Postwar Europe. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006.pp.1-39. ISBN 978-0-8223-3817-8. 366p.

Munro, James: “If it isn’t clear it isn’t French: language and identity”, 2000. **Please note:** Only pages 129-133.

Howarth, David & Varouakis, Georgios: “Citizenship, Nationalism and National Identity”, In: “Contemporary France: Introduction to French Politics and Society”, 2003.

Uffe Østergård: Peasants and Danes: The Danish national identity and political culture. **Hand out.**

Bo Lidegaard. *A Short History of Denmark in the 20th Century*. Copenhagen: Gyldendal 2009, pp. 15-47.

Petra T.-D- Chu: French Art after the Commune (In: Nineteenth Century European Art, p. 373 – 408) (hand out)

Baudelaire, Charles: The Painter of Modern Life, Phaidon Press (1964).

Prost, Antoine : “Verdun” in Nora, Pierre: “Realms of Memory Vol. I-III” (excerpts). Columbia University Press, 1996.

“Revolutionary Europe 1789-1989, 2005. Compendium.

Gordon Wright: "France in Modern Times", 1995. Compendium.

Katrine Varley: "The Taboos of Defeat: Unmentionable Memories of the Franco-Prussian War in France 1870-1914. In: "Defeat and Memory. Cultural Histories of Military defeat in the Modern Era. Ed. By Jenny Macleod, 2008. **Available on Blackboard.**

Hewitt, Leah D.: "Film As Memory: A Battleground for shaping identity" in Studies of European Culture and History Series. Palgrave, 2008.

Rousso, Henry: "The Neurosis", In: "The Vichy Syndrome. History and Memory in France since 1944" Harvard University Press, 1991

Golsan, Richard J.: The Legacy of World War II in France (hand out)

Cohen, William B.: "The Algerian War and French memory", in: Contemporary European History, 9, Cambridge, 2000.

House, Jim and MacMaster, Neil: "Paris 1961. Algerians, State Terror, and Memory", Oxford University Press, 2006.

Haddad and Balz: The October Riots in France: A Failed Immigration Policy or the Empire Strikes back?" Compendium.

Alec G. Hargreaves. "Multi ethnic France". Compendium.

Films:

Le Chagrin et la Pitie, Marcel Ophüls, 1969 (The Sorrow and the Pity)

Lucien Lacombe, Louis Malle 1974.

Au Revoir les Enfants, Louis Malle, 1987.

La Rafle. Roselyne Bosch 2010.

La Haine (The Hate), Mathieu Kassovitz, 1995.

Course Schedule

Session 1

Thursday, August 25

Introduction to the course

Our first session will attempt to make clear our particular approach to the collective memory of the nation. Concepts such as cultural memory and memory sites will be introduced and the framework and structure of the course will be presented. We will discuss the importance of memory and forgetting when building national identity.

Required readings:

Aleida Assmann, Remembrance and Memory.

<http://www.goethe.de/ges/pok/dos/dos/ern/kug/en3106036.htm>

Jan Jansen, Memory as a Social Phenomenon – Core Concepts in Memory Studies.

<http://www.goethe.de/ges/pok/dos/dos/ern/kug/en2984071.htm>

Nancy Wood: Vectors of Memory, introduction, Compendium.

Further readings:

Pierre Nora: From Between Memory and History: *Les Lieux de Mémoire*. In: “Theories of Memory. A Reader”: Pages 144-149.

Session 2

Monday, August 29

JOINT SESSION

Instructor: Thorsten Wagner

Memory and Identity – core issues of European history

Different approaches to Modern European History and its major turning-points will be presented. The memory of revolutions, social and national movements, civil strife and war has proven both to have a divisive and uniting impact on European societies over the decades. How did especially the iconic years of 1945 and 1989 change the ramifications of European memory and identity?

Required reading:

Alon Confino, Remembering the Second World War, 1945-1965: Narratives of Victimhood and Genocide. *Cultural Analysis* 4 (2005), 46-75.

Further readings

Lebow, Richard Ned, Wulf Kansteiner, Claudio Fogu (eds.): *The Politics of Memory in Postwar Europe*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006.pp.1-39. ISBN 978-0-8223-3817-8. 366p.

Session 3

Thursday, September 1

Memory and Identity – core issues of modern French history

We will take our starting point in a discussion of the impact of the French revolution on the modern concept of the nation. The revolution did not only give birth to an entirely new way of perceiving national communities, but also to values that are still considered essential to French self perception.

The Revolution was followed by at least a century of political and social turmoil. 19th Century France was marked by recurrent revolutions, uprisings and coup d'états, changing monarchies, empires and republics. This class will also outline key moments of 19th century French history.

Required readings:

James Munro: "If it isn't clear it isn't French: language and identity", 2000. **Please note:** Only pages 129-133 (Until "The Defence of French").

David Howarth & Georgios Varouakis: "Citizenship, Nationalism and National Identity", In: "Contemporary France: Introduction to French Politics and Society", 2003. **Please note:** only pages 102-107 (until: "Nationalism of the Right").

Pablo Mukherjee, Introduction: Race/Nation. In: Theories of Memory. A Reader: Pages 238-241.
And Étienne Balibar: from The Nation Form: History and Ideology. In: Theories of Memory. A Reader: Pages 253-261.

Suggestions for historical readings on this period:

David S. Mason: "Revolutionary Europe 1789-1989. Chapter 1 and 2. Compendium.

Gordon Wright: "France in Modern Times", 1995, chapter 5 and 6. Compendium.

William Doyle: The French Revolution. A Very Short Introduction. Available at the DIS library. On Reserve shelf.

Session 4

Monday, September 5

Danish Memory and Identity

This class will serve as an introduction to the destinations for the short study tour to Jutland. What did Denmark's way into modernity look like? We will discuss the development of the unique Danish Folk High School tradition and the impact it has had on Modern Danish Identity. The key ideas behind the establishment of Open Prisons in Denmark will be introduced and we will discuss how these reflect key Danish values, such as social trust and responsibility.

Required reading:

Uffe Østergård: Peasants and Danes: The Danish national identity and political culture. **Hand out.**

Further readings:

Bo Lidegaard. *A Short History of Denmark in the 20th Century*. Copenhagen: Gyldendal 2009, pp. 15-47.

Film session**Wednesday, September 7, 1. p.m.**

We will watch the movie *la Rafle* (The Round Up) about the round up by French police of close to 13.000 French and foreign Jews in Paris on July 16, 1942. We will discuss this movie and World War II in France during Session 6 on September 15.

September 8-10: SHORT STUDY TOUR TO JUTLAND**Session 5****Monday, September 12***The wounded giant 1870 and the hell of Verdun 1916*

Guest lecturer: Carsten Pape

1870 became a tragic turning point in French history: The loss of Alsace and parts of Lorraine to Prussia was a devastating blow to French self-perception and the Paris Commune was the bloodiest uprising that France had seen since the Revolution of 1789. After the war, the humiliating defeat was to give rise to what has been described as one of the most efficient programs of national education. The idea was to strengthen the national moral of the population in order to rebuild the grandeur of France.

In 1916, France and Germany were facing each other again at the battle of Verdun which would become one of the bloodiest in history. This time the French would not let the Germans pass: *ils ne passeront pas* became the motto of the ten month's long bloody defence of Verdun. We will discuss why the French came to regard Verdun as *the* memory site which summed up the war.

Required readings:

Katrine Varley: "The Taboos of Defeat: Unmentionable Memories of the Franco-Prussian War in France 1870-1914. In: "Defeat and Memory. Cultural Histories of Military defeat in the Modern Era. Ed. By Jenny Macleod, 2008. **Available on Blackboard.**

Antoine Prost: "Verdun", in "Realms of Memory", 1998. Compendium.

Suggestions for historical readings on this period:

David S. Mason: "Revolutionary Europe 1789-1889, 2005. Chapter 9. Available on blackboard.

W. Scott Haine: "The History of France, 2000. Chapter 8. Available at the DIS library. On reserve shelf.

Session 6**Thursday, September 15***World War II in French memory*

The struggle to come to terms with the memory of Holocaust memory has been particularly intense in France, since France cooperated actively in the deportation of Jews from French territory. France's unique status as resisting **and** collaborating nation also reveals deep inner divisions of the country. This class will ask into, how the memory of the Second World War has inflected French self perception up until today? We will also discuss the movie "La Rafle".

Required readings and movies:

Leah D. Hewitt: "Film As Memory: A Battleground for shaping identity" in Studies of European Culture and History Series. Palgrave, 2008. Compendium.

Henry Rousso: "The Neurosis", In: "The Vichy Syndrome. History and Memory in France since 1944" Harvard University Press, 1991. Compendium.

Movie: "La Rafle"

Further readings

Richard J. Golsan: The Legacy of World War II in France. **Available on Blackboard.**

Suggestions for historical readings on this period:

W. Scott Haine: "The History of France, 2000. Chapter 9. Available at the DIS library. On reserve shelf.

Session, 7

Monday, September 19

PRE-TOUR EXAM

Form groups and choose topics for the student presentation during the France tour.

Session 8

Thursday, September 22

Impressionism – Modernity – Paris

Guest lecturer: Suzanne da Cunha Bang

This class will focus on and analyze an era within the history of art that launched the birth of modernity and changed the way we see the world. The Impressionistic movement is probably the most important artistic movement in the world and at least the most famous. It lasted for the last 30 years of the 19th century in France, and its artists are the most famous artists in the world.

Before delving into the development of Impressionism we will examine the city of Paris during the second Empire, the reign of Napoleon III and its emergence as a modern metropolis.

In order to truly appreciate the new you have to be familiar with "the old", so the class will include a short description of the established art world in Paris in the 1850s.

Required reading:

Petra T.-D- Chu: French Art after the Commune (In: Nineteenth Century European Art, p. 373 – 408)

Further readings:

Charles Baudelaire: *The Painter of Modern Life*. Compendium

Alistair Horne: “The Second Empire” in “Seven Ages of Paris”, Compendium.

Session 9

Monday, September 26

JOINT SESSION

Instructor: Carsten Pape

Mapping the city: the history and development of European Cities

How did the European city develop and how do we trace different layers of history in European cities today? As we prepare to become ‘city literates’, we discuss the shared past through common denominators and learn how to read maps.

Map assignment handed out in class

No readings for this class

Session 10

Thursday, September 29

Study tour preparation

This class will be spent on study tour preparations as we go over the study tour and introduce the travel itinerary.

Guest lecture by Toby Musgrave on the divine gardens of Versailles

Map assignment due

MARCH 5-12: LONG STUDY TOUR

(*Oral presentations* during tour: on specific memorials, architecture, museums etc.)

Session 11

Monday, October 10

Study tour wrap up

Photo assignment due

Presentations in class

No readings for this class

Session 12

Thursday, October 13*Study tour wrap up**Photo assignment due**Presentations in class*

No readings for this class

Session 13**Monday, October 17***Colonialism and French Identity*

As France was losing its status as leading nation in Europe it sought to make up for this loss of prestige and power by enlarging its empire. We will look into the development of the French empire and analyze how the colonial exhibitions and world exhibitions were used to celebrate France's colonial achievements.

Readings

TBA*Turn in introduction to topic paper***Field study****Wednesday, October 19. 1 p.m.**

Further info TBA

Session 14**Thursday, October 20**

Taking our starting point in the Algerian War (1954-1962), we will ask into how France has dealt with its colonial past. Both the Algerian War itself and this violent event in 1961 are examples of how silence and forgetting have been used as a means of creating national unity.

Required reading:

William B. Cohen: "The Algerian War and French Memory"

Session 15**Monday, October 24***Multiculturalism and immigration in France – "La Haine"*

We will analyze and discuss Kassovitz' renowned movie from 1995 "La Haine" (Hate) and use it as an opener for a discussion of immigration and multiculturalism in France.

Required readings:

Haddad and Balz: The October Riots in France: A Failed Immigration Policy or the Empire Strikes back?" Compendium.

"Multi ethnic France". Alec G. Hargreaves. Compendium.

Movie: La Haine (The Hate), Mathieu Kassovitz, 1995. **Time and place TBA.**

Session 16

Thursday, October 27

POST TOUR EXAM

Wrap up – French Identity today?

Required readings:

TBA

OCTOBER 29 - NOVEMBER 13: Travel Break

Session 17

Monday, November 14

JOINT SESSION

Further info TBA

Session 18

Thursday, November 17. Please note that this is an evening session: No class in the morning!

JOINT SESSION

Closing seminar on European memory and identity

Further info TBA.

Final paper due: December 1