

**Code: FLMD-214E.07  
FLMD-212E.07**

**Course title: Film History Seminar: History and Memory in Contemporary Eastern European Cinemas**

**Course convenor:** László Strausz

**Class time and location:** Wednesday 9.00-10.30, Room -137

**Course type:** Seminar

**Course content:** The course will attempt to map various ways of depicting history and social change in post-socialist feature film production. Primarily we will concentrate on the imprints of major social-historical shifts on cinema, i.e. aspects of cultural memory in select countries within the region. Questions in focus include: how does cinema reflect the political changes that accompany the end of the Cold War? Which are the thematic and stylistic elements of the post-communist cinemas? What are the major differences between the various national cinemas and their ways of remembering the past? We will also investigate some issues that stand at the intersection of historical representation, cinematic memory and film genres. Investigated questions include: how are historical topics or themes dealt with when the past is recreated within a given generic framework? In what ways do genres influence collective memory?

Week 1: Introduction – EE Cinema before 1989

Week 2: In focus: history and memory

Week 3: The crisis of masculinity I. Cabaret Balkan

Week 4: EE insider and outsider perspectives

Week 5: The crisis of masculinity II. Generation X

Week 6: Genres: questions of nostalgia

Week 7: Genres: history as a thriller

Week 8: Genres: history as a musical

Week 9: Metaphorical, allegorical memory

Week 10: History as hesitation

Week 11: Realism, memory and subjectivity

Week 12: National identity as a palimpsestic text

Week 13: Memory, perception and the body

**Requirements:** Participants are required to regularly attend the course (more than 3 absences result in an incomplete), to watch the films and read the assigned texts weekly. Course grade is calculated after *final essay exam*, with regard to students' in-class activity.

**Learning outcomes:** Participants will become familiar with the basic strategies of representing the state socialist past in the Eastern European national cinemas, practice film analysis skills and academic writing skills

**Screened films:** Week 2: *Sunshine* (Szabó, 1999)  
Week 3: *Underground* (Kusturica, 1998)  
Week 4: *Before the Rain* (Manchevski, 1994)  
Week 5: *Rane* (Dragojevic, 1998)  
Week 6: *Sun Alley* (Hausman, 1999), *Goodbye Lenin* (Becker, 2003)  
Week 7: *The Lives of Others* (Donnersmarck, 2006), *The Legend of Rita* (Schlöndorff, 2000)  
Week 8: *Hipsters* (Todorovsky, 2008)  
Week 9: *Taxidermia* (Pálfi, 2006)  
Week 10: *The Death of Mr Lazarescu* (Puiu, 2005), *Sieranevada* (Puiu, 2016)  
Week 11: *4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days* (Mungiu, 2006)  
Week 12: *Ida* (Pawlikowski, 2013)  
Week 13: *Son of Saul* (Nemes, 2016)

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**Recommended readings:**

1. Biro, Yvette. "Landscape after Battle: Films from 'the Other Europe.' Dedalus" (Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences) Winter 1990. 161-82.
  1. Cooke, Paul (2005) *Representing East Germany Since Unification*. Oxford International Publishers, Berg.
  2. Falkowska, Janina "The "Political" in the Films of Andrzej Wajda and Krzysztof Kieslowski." *Cinema Journal*. 34 (1995): 37-50.
  3. Falkowska, Janina (ed) "National Cinemas in Postwar East-Central Europe." Special Edition of *Canadian Slavonic Papers*. 42 (2000) 1-2.
  4. Glenny, Micha (2000): *The Balkans: nationalism, war, and the Great Powers, 1804-1999*. New York: Viking.
  5. Hames, Peter (ed) (1995): *Dark Alchemy: The Films of Jan Svankmajer*. Trowbridge: Flicks Books.
  6. Hames, Peter (ed) (2004): *The cinema of Central Europe*. London—New York: Wallflower Press.
  7. Homer, Sean: "Retrieving Emir Kusturica's Underground as a critique of ethnic nationalism." *Jump Cut* 2009 Spring.  
<http://www.ejumpcut.org/archive/jc51.2009/Kusterica/index.html>
  8. Imre, Aniko (ed) (2005): *East European Cinemas*. London: Routledge, 2005.
  9. Iordanova, Dina (2001): *Cinema of flames: Balkan film, culture and the media*. London: British Film Institute.
  10. Iordanova, Dina (ed) (2006): *The cinema of the Balkans*. London—New York: Wallflower.
  11. Krstic, Igor: "Re-thinking Serbia: A Psychoanalytic Reading of Modern Serbian History and Identity through Popular Culture." *Other Voices* (March 2002)
  12. Owen, Evans "Redeeming the demon?" *Memory Studies* 3: 2 (2008) 164-177.
  13. Parvulescu, Constantin. 2009. "The Cold World Behind the Window: 4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days and Romanian Cinema's Return to real-existing socialism." *Jump Cut* 51,  
<http://ejumpcut.org/currentissue/4months/index.html> (accessed September 6, 2009)
  14. Stojanova, Christina—Dana Duma (eds) (2007) 'Romanian Cinema' *Kinokultura*, Special Issue 6 (May 2007)  
<http://www.kinokultura.com/specials/6/romanian.shtml> <accessed October 25, 2009>
  15. Todorova, Maria: *Imagining the Balkans*. Oxford University, 2009
  16. Uricaru, Ioana. 2008. "4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days: The Corruption of Intimacy." *Film Quarterly* 61:12-17.
  17. Wilson, Emma. 2008. "4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days: An "Abortion Movie"?" *Film Quarterly* 61:18-23.
  18. Verdery, Katherine (1996) "The "Etatization" of Time in Ceausescu's Romania" In. *What Was Socialism, and What Comes Next?* Princeton N.J., Princeton University Press.
  19. Strausz, Laszlo. 2017. *Hesitant Histories on the Romanian Screen*. London, Palgrave.
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