

Course Syllabus

War and Peace in Modern Europe

24637 HIST 1330 Spring 2014

2:30-3:50pm, Wilson Hall 101

Professor Omer Bartov

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Office Hours: 12-2 Tues

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This course explores the relationship between war, culture, and society in modern Europe. The two world wars changed the political, social, and cultural landscape of Europe, and by extension, of the rest of the world, not least the United States. We will not delve into the military history of these vast conflicts; instead, we will examine how the experience of total war remolded European understanding and practices of memory and commemoration, culture and representation, humanity and civilization, utopia and revolution, catastrophe and identity. We will read influential scholarly texts and literary works, and watch important contemporary films.

Students will write a midterm paper of no more than 10 pages on a topic agreed upon with the TA or professor and a take-home exam at the end of the semester. Regular attendance at lectures and active participation in sections are expected.

Grades will be determined as follows: midterm paper = 30%; final exam = 40%; attendance and participation in class and section = 30%

All excerpted texts (PDF) and films will be available via Canvas and OCRA

Required Reading(on reserve and available for purchase)

Walter Benjamin, *The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility*

Marc Bloch, *Strange Defeat*

Albert Camus, *The First Man*

Eric Hobsbawm, *Age of Extremes* (**to be read as general historical background**)

Irène Némirovsky, *Suite Française*

Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front*

W. G. Sebald, *Austerlitz*

Required films(via OCRA):

Aleksandr Askoldov, "The Commissar" (1967, 110 min. USSR)

René Clement, "Forbidden Games" (1952, 102 min. France)

Abel Gance, "J'accuse" (1919 [2008 restoration], 166 min. France)

Elem Klimov, "Come and See" (1985, 146 min. USSR)

Sidney Lumet, "The Pawnbroker" (1965, 116 min. USA)

Louis Malle, "Au revoir les enfants" (1987, 104 min. France)

Lewis Milestone, "All Quiet on the Western Front" (1930, 138 min. USA)

Andrzej Munk, "The Passenger" (1963, 62 min. Poland)

Jean Renoir, "The Grand Illusion" (1937, 114 min. France)

Bertrand Tavernier, "Life and Nothing But" (1989, 135 min. France)

Hans-Jürgen Syberberg, "Hitler, a Film from Germany (Our Hitler)" (1977, 442 min. Germany)

Recommended reading (on reserve):

Omer Bartov, *The "Jew" in Cinema*

Joanna Bourke, *Dismembering the Male*

Jean Bruller Vercors, *Le silence de la mer*

Albert Camus, *Combat*

Cahrlotte Delbo, *None of Us Will Return*

Alfred Döblin, *Journey to Poland*

Natalia Ginzburg, *All Our Yesterdays*

Eric Hobsbawm, *Age of Extremes*

Anton Kaes, *Shell shock cinema*

Sven Lindqvist, *Exterminate All the Brutes*

Joseph Roth, *The Wandering Jews*

Viktor Shklovsky, A Sentimental Journey

Nicholas Stargardt, *Witnesses of War: Children's Lives Under the Nazis*

Klaus Theweleit, Male Fantasies

Paul Virilio, War and Cinema

Schedule

Week 1 (1/23): Introduction

I. WWI

Week 2 (1/28, 30): War and culture

Lecture:

Eric Hobsbawm, "The Century: a Bird's Eye View" in *The Age of Extremes*, 1-20.

Modris Eksteins, "Paris" in *Rites of Spring*, 1-50. (OCRA)

Jay Winter, "Homecomings: The Return of the Dead" in *Sites of Memory Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History*, 15-28. (OCRA)

Discussion Section:

Henri Barbusse, *Under Fire*: "The Vision"; "In the Earth"; "Habits"; "Leave"; "Bombardment"; "Under Fire"; "Dawn" (eBook)

J'accuse (film)

Week 3 (2/4, 6): Memory and representation

Lecture:

Eric Hobsbawm, "The Age of Total War" in *Age of Extremes*, 21-35.

Paul Fussell, "The Troglodyte World" in *Great War and Modern Memory*, 39-81. (OCRA)

John Chambers III, "All Quiet on the Western Front' (1930): The Anti-war Film and the Image of the First World War" *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 14 (1994): 377-411 (OCRA)

Discussion Section:

Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front*, Chapter II, V, VI, VII, IX, and XII

All Quiet on the Western Front (film)

Week 4 (2/11, 13): Children of the revolution

Lecture:

Eric Hobsbawm, "The World Revolution," *Age of Extremes*, 54-71.

Yuri Slezkine, "Babel's First Love: Jews and the Russian Revolution" (188-203), and "Hodl's Choice: The Jews and Three Promised Lands" (204-216) in *The Jewish Century*, (OCRA)

Discussion Section:

Isaak Babel, *Red Cavalry*: "A Letter" (44-48); "The Reserve Cavalry Commander" (49-51); "Gedali" (63-65); "My First Goose" (66-69); "The Rabbi" (70-72); "The Road to Brody" (73-74); "The Tachanka Theory" (75-77); "Dolgushov's Death" (78-81); "The Story of a Horse;" (98-101); "Konkin" (102-105); "Salt" (109-112); "After the Battle" (160-163); "The Song" (164-166); "The Rabbi's Son" (167-169); "Makhno's Boys" (173-174); "A Hardworking Woman" (175-177) (OCRA)

Vasily Grossman, "In the Town of Berdichev," 15-32 (OCRA)

The Commissar (film)

II. INTERWAR:

Week 5 (2/20): Unknown soldiers

Lecture:

Eric Hobsbawm, "Into the Economic Abyss" in *Age of Extremes* 85-108.

Annette Becker and Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau, "Collective Mourning" (182-203), "Understanding the Great War" (226-238) in *14-18: Understanding the Great War* (OCRA)

Discussion Section:

Marc Bloch, *Strange Defeat*, "One of the Vanquished" (103-125), "Examination of the Frenchman" (156-176), "The Testamentary Instructions of Marc Bloch," 177-178.

Life and Nothing But (film)

Week 6 (2/25, 27): Unmaking humanity

Lecture:

Eric Hobsbawm, "The Fall of Liberalism" in *Age of Extremes*, 109-141

Detlev Peukert, "Postwar Crisis 1920-1923" (52-66) and "Generation Gaps and emancipatory Struggles" (86-104) in *The Weimar Republic* (OCRA)

A.G. Adler, "Panorama" (3-6) and "The Box" (111-134) in *Panorama* (OCRA)

Discussion Section:

Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents* (OCRA)

T.S. Eliot, "The Wasteland"

Week 7 (3/4, 6): Back to the Future

Lecture:

Eric Hobsbawm, "The Arts 1914-1945" in *Age of Extremes*, 178-198

Omer Bartov, "Jew as Perpetrator" in *The "Jew" In Cinema*, 1-27. (OCRA)

Gershom Scholem, Preface (3-5) and "The Years of Emigration (1933-1940)" (245-283) in *Walter Benjamin: The Story of a Friendship* (OCRA)

Discussion Section:

Walter Benjamin, The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction

The Grand Illusion (film)

III. WWII:

Week 8 (3/11, 13): Shattered Illusions

Lecture:

Eric Hobsbawm, *Age of Extremes*, "Real Socialism" (372-394) and "Against the Common Enemy" (142-161) in *The Age of Extremes*

John Garrard and Carol Garrard, *Bones of Berdichev: the life and fate of Vasily Grossman*, "Buried Alive," 263-299 (OCRA)

Olga Gershenson, *The Phantom Holocaust*, "The End of the Thaw", 159-172. (OCRA)

Discussion Section:

Vasili Grossman, *Life and Fate*, Part I: 18-19 (80-95); Part II: 14-15 (391-411), 46-48 (541-554); Part III: 54-55 (831-841) (OCRA)

Come and See (film)

Week 9 (3/18, 20): Personal catastrophe

Lecture:

Eric Hobsbawm, "Against the Common Enemy" in *Age of Extremes*, 161-177.

Philippe Burrin, "The French and the Germans" (191-209) and "Intellectuals and Self-Preservation" (306-323) in *France Under the Germans*. (OCRA)

Discussion Section:

Ruth Franklin, "Scandale Francaise," *The New Republic*, January 30, 2008 (OCRA)

Eduard Rothstein, "Ambivalence as part of Author's Legacy" *New York Times*, October 20, 2008 (OCRA)

Irène Némirovsky, *Suite Française*, Storm in June: 1-15, 40-43, 49-64, 104-112, 121-128, 134-144, 167-179; Dolce, 207-221, 234-239, 279-300, 331-350, 358-367

Forbidden Games (film)

*** Midterm paper due ***

Week 10 (4/1, 3): Against History

Lecture:

Eric Hobsbawm, "Total War" in *Age of Extremes*, 36-53.

Detlev Peukert, "Working-Class Resistance: Problems and Options" (35-48) and Klemens von Klemperer, "The Solitary Witness" (129-139) in *Contending with Hitler: Varieties of German Resistance in the Third Reich*, ed. David Clay Large (OCRA)

Tara Zahra, "Renationalizing Displaced Children" in *The Lost Children*, 118-145. (OCRA)

Discussion Section:

Hans Fallada, *Every Man Dies Alone*, Chapter 1: 9-14, Chapter 8: 29-33, Chapter 17: 127-136, Chapter 33: 277-281, Chapter 46: 353-360, Chapter 50, 378-381, Chapter 66: 469-72, Chapter 68: 485-493 (OCRA)

Au revoir les enfants (film)

III. AFTERMATH:

Week 11 (4/8, 10): Thoughts of destruction

Lecture:

Eric Hobsbawm, "Cold War," in *Age of Extremes*, 225-237 and 252-256.

Susan Sontag, "Syberberg's Hitler" in *Under the Sign of Saturn*, 137-165 (OCRA)

Saul Friedländer, *Reflections of Nazism: an essay on Kitsch and death*, 94-115 (OCRA)

Discussion Section:

Arendt-Jaspers correspondence, Letters 46-50 (60-70), Letters 104-107 (154-164) (OCRA)

Georges Perec, *W or the Memory of Childhood*, Chapters: 1-8 (1-42), 12-14 (65-74), 29-3- (134-140), 35-37 (156-164) (OCRA)

Hitler, a Film from Germany (film)

Week 12 (4/15, 17): Wanderers in the void

Lecture:

Eric Hobsbawm, "The End of Empire" (199-222) and "Real Socialism" (394-400) in *Age of Extremes*.

Ronald Aronson, "Violence and Communism" (117-118) and "No Exit" (207-225) in *Camus and Sartre* (OCRA)

Stuart Liebman, "Man on the Tracks/Eroica/Bad Luck/ Passenger (OCRA)

Discussion Section:

Albert Camus, *The First Man*, Part I: "Saint-Briuec," "The Father. His Death. The War. The Bombing," "The Family," and "School" and Part II: "A Mystery to Himself"

The Passenger (film)

Week 13 (4/22, 24): Putting it back together again**Lecture:**

Eric Hobsbawm, *Age of Extremes*, "The End of Socialism" (475-499) and "The Avant-Garde Dies--The Arts After 1950" (500-521).

Omer Bartov, "Chambers of Horror: The Reordering of Murders Past" in *Murder In Our Midst*, 153-186. (OCRA)

Lynn L. Wolff, "H.G. Adler and W.G. Sebald: From History and Literature to Literature as Historiography" *Monatshefte* 103: 2 (2011) : 257-275 (OCRA)

Discussion Section:

W. G. Sebald, *Austerlitz*, (excerpt)

The Pawnbroker (film)

*** Take-home exam due at the end of reading week ***

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