

War and Experience. Twentieth-Century Italian Narratives

16:560:674

Th 4:30-7:10

AB5050

Paola Gambarota

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 2-4 pm

gambarot@italian.rutgers.edu

The clash between institutional representations of war (e.g., by government, public media, school) and the lived experiences of war produces the need to make sense of those experiences and to integrate them into public discourse. How was fighting and dying in war legitimized in the twentieth century and what did war mean to those who fought it? This seminar explores the ways in which the arts have been used to frame and understand the modern experience of war. Drawing on classic theories (e.g., Benjamin, White, Fussel, Leed, Barthes, Jameson), we will analyze how cultural and formal paradigms interact with lived historical events in memoirs, fictional narratives, poems, postcards, photographs, and films. Our discussion will concentrate on two themes, namely, the relation between experience and representation and the question of the medium: how did different genres and media affect the articulation of the war experience?

Required Texts

- Electronic Texts in PDF
- Gabriele D'Annunzio, *Notturmo* (available also online through the library)
- Erich. M. Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front*
- Emilio Lussu, *A Soldier on the Southern Front*
- Ennio Flaiano, *A Time to Kill*
- Curzio Malaparte, *The Skin*

Suggested Readings (historical background)

Spencer Di Scala, *Italy From Revolution To Republic*

Course Requirements

- Participation in class discussion, weekly presentations, and presentations for the essay (50%)
- Essay (50%)

SEMINAR SCHEDULE

I Week, 9/5

Narrating War. Memory and Experience

Walter Benjamin, "The Storyteller" (only sections I-XV)

Joanna Bourke, "Remembering' War"

Dominick LaCapra, "Writing History, Writing Trauma" (only pp. 1-16)

Optional Readings: Hayden White, "The Value of Narrativity"

II Week, 9/12

Avantgarde Art as War, War as Avantgarde Art

Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *Manifesto of Futurism; Technical Manifesto; Destruction of Syntax*

Eric Leed, "The Structure of the War Experience," *No Man's Land*

Cinzia Sartini Blum, "Rhetorical Strategies and Gender in Marinetti's Futurist Manifestos"

Optional Readings: Ialongo, *Marinetti and His Politics*; Cohen, "Fatal Symbiosis;" Saint-Amour, *Tense Future*

III Week, 9/19

The Myth of the Aviator and the Cult of Martyrs in D'Annunzio's Experimental Narrative

Gabriele D'Annunzio, *Notturmo* (available also online through the library)

Spera, "Le forme del racconto notturno"

Astrid Erll, "Wars We Have Seen"

Optional Readings: Kohns, "An Aesthetics of the Unbearable;" Eric Leed, "Myth and Modern War," *No Man's Land*

- IV Week, 9/26 Languages of the Poet Soldier**
 Giuseppe Ungaretti, selections from *L'Allegria*; Ungaretti, "Ungaretti commenta Ungaretti;"
 Umberto Saba, selections from *Military Poems* and *History and Chronicle of the Songbook*
 Enzo Traverso, "From Field of Honor To Slaughterhouse," *Fire and Blood*
Optional Readings: Cooper, "Giuseppe Ungaretti's Disanimate Modernism;" Gambarota, "Beyond Revealed Religions"
- V Week, 10/3 World War I and Aesthetic Value Judgments**
 Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front*
 Hutchinson, "Partial Accusation?"
Choose one of the following: Bloom, "Introduction;" Franklin, "The Paris Review Perspective;"
 Murdoch, "On All Quiet on the Western Front"
- VI Week, 10/10 Propaganda and Illustration. Postcards, Posters, and Photos in WWI**
 WJT Mitchell, "What do Pictures Really Want?"
 Enzo Traverso, "Imaginaries of Violence," *Fire and Blood*
 Nicola della Volpe, "Grande guerra e propaganda"
 Piero Delbello, "La cartolina postale"
 Julia Adeney Thomas, "The Evidence of Sight"
Optional Readings: Barthes, "The Rhetoric of the Image;"
- VII Week, 10/17 To Mutiny or Not to Mutiny**
 Emilio Lussu, *A Soldier on the Southern Front*
 Jameson, "War and Representation"
Optional Readings: Eric Leed, "War in the Labyrinth", *No Man's Land*
- VIII Week, 10/24 Resisting the Colonial Gaze?**
 Ennio Flaiano, *A Time To Kill*
 Lucia Re, "Italy's First Post-Colonial Novel"
If Only I Where That Warrior (docum. film)
 Postcards (Enrico de Seta)
Optional Readings: Marrocu, "Flaiano in Africa;" Mengozzi, "Lo sguardo e la colpa;" Trento, *From Marinetti to Pasolini*; De Donno and Srivastava, "Editorial. Colonial and Postcolonial Italy"
- IX Week, 10/31 War Films, Between Documentary and Melodrama.**
 Rossellini, *The White Ship*
 Ruth Ben Ghat, "Rossellini's War Trilogy"
 Bordwell and Thompson, "Documentary Versus Fiction"
Optional Readings: Pietro Cavallo, "La seconda guerra mondiale in pellicola"
- X Week, 11/7 Narratives of Liberation/Occupation**
 Curzio Malaparte *The Skin*
 Marisa Escobar, "Sleights of Hand: Black Skin and Curzio Malaparte's *La pelle*"
 Clips from Rossellini, *Paisan*
Optional Readings: Kundera, "The Skin, Malaparte's Arch-Novel;" Biondi, "Malaparte e le guerre"
- XI Week, 11/14 Images of Liberation/Occupation**
 IWM Archive photos and photos from *Life*
 Ellwood, "The Trauma of Liberation"
 Film: *Naples is a Battlefield* (IWM Digital Archive)
 Griffin, "The Great War Photographers"
 Thompson and Bordwell, "Wartime Documentaries"
- XII Week, 11/21 Women and Men of the Resistance**
 Stories from *Resisting Bodies* or 'Alternate'

Renata Viganò, Selections from *Partisan Wedding*
Beppe Fenoglio, Selections from *The Twenty-three Days of the City of Alba*
Donald Sassoon, "Italy After Fascism. The Predicament of Dominant Narratives"
Liliana Cavani *La Donna nella Resistenza* (docum. film)
Alternate: Zangrandi, *I giorni veri*

XIII Week, 11/26 On the Other Side: The Experience of a Saló Soldier

Giose Rimanelli, *The Day of the Lion*
Thomas Cragin, "Ma qual è la nostra patria, sergente? *Tiro al piccione* and the Politics of Memory"
Optional Readings: Postmann, "To Hell and Back"

XIV Week, 12/5 Presentations of essays

WORKS CITED IN SYLLABUS (including optional readings)

- Adeney Thomas, Julia. "The evidence of Sight." *History and Theory*, 48.4, Theme Issue: Photography and Historical Interpretation (2009): 151-168.
- Barthes, Roland. "The Rethoric of the Image," *Image, Music, Text*. Ed. and trans. Stephen Heath. New York: Hill and Wang, 1977. 32-51.
- Ben-Ghiat, Ruth. "The Fascist War Trilogy." *Roberto Rossellini. Magician of the Real*. Eds. David Forgacs, Sarah Lutton, and Geoffrey Nowell Smith. London: BFI Publishing, 2000. 21-34.
- Benjamin, Walter. "The Storyteller." *The Novel: an Anthology of Criticism and Theory*. Ed. Dorothy J. Hale. Maiden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006. 361-378.
- Biondi, Marino. "Malaparte e le guerre del Novecento." *Curzio Malaparte: il narratore, il politologo e il cittadino di Prato e dell'Europa*. Eds. Renato Barilli and Vittoria Baroncelli. Atti del Convegno di Prato, CUEN, 1998. 223-283.
- Bloom, Harold. "Introduction." *Erich Maria Remarque's All Quiet on the Western Front*. New York: Chelsea House, 2009. 1-2.
- Blum, Cinzia Sartini. "Rhetorical Strategies and Gender in Marinetti's Futurist Manifestos." *Italica* Vol. 67. No. 2 (1990): 196-211.
- Bordwell, David and Kristin Thomson. "Documentary versus Fiction." *Film Art. An Introduction*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1997. 42-46.
- Bourke, Joanna. "'Remembering' War." *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 39, No. 4, Special Issue: Collective Memory (Oct., 2004): 473-485.
- Cavallo, Pietro, "La seconda guerra mondiale in pellicola." *Cinema a passo romano*. Eds. Pietro Cavallo, Pasquale Iaccio. Napoli: Liguori, 2000. 109-157.
- Cohen, Milton. "Fatal Symbiosis: Modernism and the First World War." *The Literature of the Great War Reconsidered*. Eds. Patrick Quinn and Steven Trout. New York, NY: Palgrave, 2001. 159-171.
- Cooper, Allison. "Giuseppe Ungaretti's Disanimate Modernism." *Annali d'Italianistica* 33 (2015): 99-113.
- D'Annunzio, Gabriele. *Notturmo*. Trans. Stephen Sartarelli. Yale University Press, 2011 (also available online through the library).
- Cragin, Thomas. "Ma qual è la nostra patria, sergente? *Tiro al piccione* and the Politics of Memory." *Italica*, Vol. 86, No. 3 (2009): 430-451.
- De Donno, Fabrizio and Srivastava, Neelam. "Editorial. Colonial and Postcolonial Italy." *Interventions* 8 (3): 371-379.
- Della Volpe, Nicola. "Grande Guerra e Propaganda." *L'Arma della Persuasione, Parole ed Immagini di Propaganda nella Grande Guerra*. Eds. Maria Masau Dan and Donatella Porcedda. Gorizia: 1991. 15-26.
- Delbello, Piero. "La Cartolina nella Prima Guerra Mondiale." *L'Arma della Persuasione, Parole ed Immagini di Propaganda nella Grande Guerra*. Eds. Maria Masau Dan and Donatella Porcedda. Gorizia: Edizioni della Laguna, 1991. 289-303.
- Di Scala, Spencer. *Italy From Revolution To Republic*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2004.
- Ellwood, David W. "The Trauma of Liberation." *Transmission of Memory*. Ed. Patrizia Sambuco. Farleigh Dickinson UP, 2018. 125-142.

- Erll, Astrid. "Wars We Have Seen." *Memories and Representations of War*. Eds. Elena Lamberti and Vita Fortunati. Amsterdam/ New York: 2009. 27-43.
- Escolar, Marisa. "Sleights of Hand: Black Skin and Curzio Malaparte's *La pelle*." *California Italian Studies* 3, 1 (2012): 1-20.
- Fenoglio, Beppe. *The Twenty-three Days of the City of Alba. Stories*. Trans. John Shepley. South Royalton, VT: Steerforth Press, 2002.
- Flaiano, Ennio. *A Time to Kill*. Trans. Stuart Hood. London: Quartet Books, 1992.
- Franklin, Ruth. "The Paris Review Perspective." *All Quiet on the Western Front by Erich Maria Remarque*. Ed. Brian Murdoch. Pasadena, Calif.: Salem Press, 2011. 15-20.
- Gambarota, Paola. "Beyond Revealed Religions: Saba, the Creatures, and the Political Animal." *Modern Language Notes* 120 (2005): 137-160.
- Hutchinson, Peter. "Partial Accusation? Stylistic and Structural Methods in *All Quiet on the Western Front*." *All Quiet on the Western Front by Erich Maria Remarque*. Ed. Brian Murdoch. Pasadena, Calif.: Salem Press, 2011. 53-67.
- Ialongo, Ernest. "From the Foundation to the Crisis of Caporetto." *F.T. Marinetti and His Politics*. Madison, NJ: Farleigh Dickinson UP, 2015. 37-73.
- Jameson, Fredric. "War and Representation." *PMLA* 124. 5 (2009): 1532-1547.
- Jünger, Ernst. "War and Photography." Trans. Anthony Nassar. *New German Critique* No. 59, Special Issue on Ernst Jünger (Spring – Summer 1993): 24-26.
- Kohns, Oliver. "An Aesthetics of the Unbearable." *Image & Narrative* 14, 3 (2013): 141-150.
- Kundera, Milan. "The Skin, Malaparte's Arch-Novel." *Encounter*. Trans. Linda Asher. New York, NY: Harper Collins, 2009. 156-178.
- LaCapra, Dominick. "Writing History, Writing Trauma." *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, Johns Hopkins UP, 2001.
- Leed, Eric J. *No Man's Land*. London/ Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1979.
- Lussu, Emilio. *A Soldier on the Southern Front*. Trans. Gregory Conti. New York, NY: Rizzoli ex libris, 2014.
- Malaparte, Curzio. *The Skin*. Trans. David Moore. New York Review Books Classics, 2013.
- Marinetti, Filippo Tommaso. *Critical Writings*. Trans. Doug Thompson. New York, NY: Farrar, Strauss & Giroux, 2006.
- Marrocu, Luciano. "Flaiano in Africa." *Colonialism and National Identity*. Eds. Paolo Bertella Farnetti and Cecilia Dau Novelli. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015. 95-109.
- Mengozi, Chiara. "Lo sguardo e la colpa: *Tempo di uccidere* di Ennio Flaiano e la dialettica servo-signore alla prova del colonialism." *MLN*, Vol. 131, No 1 (2016): 174-195.
- Mitchell, W. J. T. "What Do Pictures Really Want?" *October* 77 (Summer 1996): 71-82.
- Murdoch, Brian. "On All Quiet On the Western Front." *All Quiet on the Western Front by Erich Maria Remarque*. Ed. Brian Murdoch. Pasadena, Calif.: Salem Press, 2011. 3-9.
- Postman, Sheryl Lynn. "To Hell and Back: Marco Laudato's Journey in Rimaneli's *Tiro al piccione*." *Forum italicum* 27, 1/2 (1993): 251-261.
- Re, Lucia. "Italy's first postcolonial novel and the end of(neo)realism." *The Italianist* 37, 3 (2017): 416-435.
- Remarque, Erich Maria. *All Quiet on the Western Front*. Trans. A. W. Wheen. New York: Random House, 1982.
- Resisting Bodies. Narratives of Italian Partisan Women*. Trans. Rosetta d'Angelo and Barbara Zaczek. Chapel Hill, NC: Annali d'Italianistica, 2008.
- Rimaneli, Giose. *The Day of the Lion*. Trans. Ben Johnson. New York, NY: Random House, 1954.
- Saba, Umberto. "Versi militari," *Tutte le poesie*. Milano: I Meridiani Mondadori, 1988. 43-69.
- *History and Chronicle of the Songbook*. Trans. Stephen Sartarelli. Riverdale, NY: Sheep Meadow Press, 1998. 3-25.
- Sassoon, Donald. "Italy After Fascism. The Predicament of Dominant Narratives." *Life After Death*. Eds. Richard Bessel and Dirk Schumann. Cambridge UP, 2003. 259-290.
- Spera, Francesco. "La forme del racconto notturno." *D'Annunzio notturno. Atti dell'VIII Congresso di studi dannunziani*. Pescara: Centro nazionale di studi dannunziani, 1986. 199-215.
- Traverso, Enzo. *Frie and Blood. The European Civil War, 1914-1945*. Trans. David Fernbach. New York: Verso, 2016.

Trento, Giovanna. "From Marinetti to Pasolini: Massawa, the Red Sea, and the Construction of a Mediterranean Africa in Italian Literature and Cinema." *Northeast African Studies*, 12, 1, 2012 (New Series): 273-307.

Ungaretti, Giuseppe. *Life of a Man*. Trans. Allen Mandelbaum. New York: New Directions, 1958.

---- "L'Allegria." *Vita d'un uomo. Tutte le poesie*. Milano: I Meridiani Mondadori, 2001.

Viganò, Renata. *Partisan Wedding*. Trans. Suzanne Branciforte. University of Missouri Press, 1999.

Zangrandi, Giovanna. *I giorni veri*. Milano: Edizioni ISBN, 2012.

White, Hayden. "The Value of Narrativity." *Critical Inquiry* Vol. 7, No. 1 On Narrative (1980): 5-27.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

***The PMLA Issue of October 2009 (Vol. 124, N. 5) is entirely devoted to the topic of war**

***The Annali d'Italianistica 2015 Issue (Vol. 33) is devoted to WWI.**

Aravamudan, Srinivas. "Introduction: Perpetual War." *PMLA* 124. 5 (2009): 1505-1514.

Asor Rosa, Alberto. "L'epopea tragica di un popolo non guerriero." *Storia d'Italia, Annali 18. Guerra e pace*. Torino: Einaudi, 2002. 840-918.

Blum, Cinzia. *The Other Modernism. Marinetti's Futurist Fiction of Power*. University of California Press, 1996.

Butler, Judith. *Frames of War*. London: verso, 2009.

Calvino, Italo. "Ricordo di una battaglia." *La strada di San Giovanni*. Milano: Mondadori 1990. 74-85.

Caruth, Cathy ed. *Trauma: Exploration in Memory*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995.

Chabod, Federico. *L'Italia contemporanea (1918-1948)*. Torino: Einaudi, 1961.

Cortellessa, Andrea. *Le notti chiare erano tutte un'alba. Antologia dei poeti italiani nella prima guerra mondiale*. Milano: Bruno Mondadori, 1998.

D'Annunzio notturno. Atti dell'VIII Congresso di studi dannunziani. Pescara: Centro nazionale di studi dannunziani, 1986.

De Luna, Giovanni. *Il corpo del nemico ucciso. Violenza e morte nella guerra contemporanea*. Torino: Einaudi, 2006.

Fussell, Paul. *The Great War and Modern Memory*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1975.

Fussell Paul. *Wartime. Understanding and Behavior in the Second World War*. Oxford UP, 1989.

Isnenghi, Mario. *Il Mito della Grande Guerra*. Bari: Laterza, 1970.

Leys, Ruth. *Trauma. A Genealogy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.

Mosse, George L. *Fallen Soldiers. Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars*. New York/ Oxford: Oxford UP: 1990.

Narratives of Crisis. Telling Stories of Ruin and Renewal. Eds. Matthew W. Seeger and Timothy L. Sellnow. Stanford UP, 2016.

Pavone, Claudio. *Una guerra civile. Saggio storico sulla moralità nella Resistenza*. Torino: Bollati Boringhieri, 1991.

Saint-Amour, Paul K. *Tense Future. Modernism. Total War, Encyclopedic Form*. Oxford University Press, 2015.

Schiavo, Gianluca. "La rappresentazione letteraria della Resistenza: retorica o dissacrazione?." *Studi e ricerche di storia contemporanea*, 75 (June 2011): 5-29.

Scurati, Guerra. *Narrazioni e culture nella tradizione occidentale*. Roma: Donzelli, 2003.

White, Hayden. *Metahistory*. Johns Hopkins UP, 1973.

Winter, Jay. *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning. The Great War in European Cultural History*. Cambridge/ New York, 1995.

Winter Jay, *Remembering War*. New Haven/ London: Yale University Press, 2006.

Wittman, Laura. *The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Modern Mourning and the Reinvention of the Mystical Body*. Toronto UP, 2011.

On Specific Genres, on Illustrations, Photography, and Cinema

***The History and Theory 48. 4 (2009), Theme Issue: Photography and Historical Interpretation is devoted to photography and history.**

Barthes, Roland. *Camera Lucida. Reflections on Photography*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1981.

Barthes, Roland. "The Photographic Message" (1961). *A Barthes Reader*. Ed. Susan Sontag. New York: Hill & Wang,

1977. 194-210.

Benjamin, Walter. "Little History of Photography." *The Work of Art in the Age of its Mechanical Reproducibility*. Eds. Michael Jennings, Brigid Doherty, and Thomas Levin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008.

Bollati, Giulio. "Note su storia e fotografia." *Storia d'Italia. Annali 2. L'Immagine Fotografica*. Tomo primo. Torino: Einaudi, 1979. 5-55.

Brunetta, Gian Piero. "La Guerra Vicina." Renzi, Renzo, ed. *Il Cinematografo al Campo. L'Arma Nuova nel Primo Conflitto Mondiale*. Ancona: Transeuropa, 1993.

Calvino, Italo. *La Strada di San Giovanni*.

Caffarena, Fabio. *Lettere dalla Grande Guerra. Scritture del Quotidiano, Monumenti della Memoria, Fonti per la Storia. Il Caso Italiano*. Milano: Unicopli, 2005.

D'Autilia, Gabriele and Menduni Enrico, *War Is Over. 'Italai della Liberazione nelle immagini dei US Signal Corps e dell'Istituto Luce, 1943-1946*. Roma: Contrasto, 2015.

Gibelli, Antonio. "Nefaste meraviglie. Grande guerra e apoteosi della modernità." *Storia d'Italia, Annali 18. Guerra e pace*. Torino: Einaudi, 2002. 549-589.

Iaccio, Pasquale. *Cinema e Storia*. Napoli: Liguori, 2000.

Lejeune, Philippe. *On Diary*. Eds. Jeremy Popkin and Julie Rak. University of Hawaii Press, 2009.

McQuire, Scott. *Visions of Modernity. Representation, Memory, Time and Space in the Age of the Camera*. London, Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1998.

Mieszkowski, Jan. *Watching War*. Stanford UP, 2012.

Nichols, Bill. *Introduction to Documentary*. 2nd Edition. Indiana University Press, 2010.

Renzi, Renzo, ed. *Il Cinematografo al Campo. L'Arma Nuova nel Primo Conflitto Mondiale*. Ancona: Transeuropa, 1993.

Ruchatz, Jens. "The Photograph as Externalization and Trace." *A Companion to Cultural Memory Studies*. Eds. Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning. Berlin/ New York; De Gruyter, 2010. 367-387.

Saunders, Dave. *Documentary*. London, New York: Routledge, 2010.

Sontag, Susan. *On Photography*. New York London Toronto Auckland: Anchor Books Doubleday, 1990.

--- *Regarding the Pain of Others*. New York, NY: Picador, 2004.

Virilio, Paul. *War and Cinema. The Logistics of Perception*. London/ New York: Verso, 1989.