

16:560:673. War, Resistance, and Occupation: The Experience and Its Representations

Rutgers University
Department of Italian

Th, 4:30-7:10 (AB5050)

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The clash between institutional representations of war (e.g., by government, public media) and the lived experiences of war produces the need to make sense of those experiences and to integrate them into public discourse. This seminar explores the ways in which the arts and other cultural artifacts have been used to frame and understand the experience of war. Drawing on classic theories by Jameson, Fussel, Leed, Winter, Barthes, Sontag, and others, we will examine Italian representations of specific aspects of war, concentrating on the Great War, World War II, and the occupation. We will analyze how cultural and formal paradigms interact with lived historical events in memoirs, fictional narratives, poems, postcards, photographs, and films, creating a variety of modes (e.g., experiential, monumental, antagonistic). Our discussion will concentrate on two themes, namely, the relation between experience and representation and the question of the medium: how do different genres and media affect the articulation of the war experience? Materials include: readings from D'Annunzio, Marinetti, Ungaretti, Saba, Lussu, Rigoni Stern, Flaiano, Malaparte, Zangrandi, Rimaneli; films (Rossellini) and documentaries; illustrations and photographs from the periods considered.

Required Texts

- Texts on Sakai and Films online
- Gabriele D'Annunzio, transl. *Notturmo* (available online through the Rutgers libraries)
- Emilio Lussu, *A Soldier on the Southern Front*
- Ennio Flaiano, *A Time to Kill*
- Mario Rigoni Stern, *The Sergeant in the Snow*
- Curzio Malaparte, *The Skin*

Recommended Readings (historical background)

Spencer Di Scala, *Italy From Revolution To Republic*
Federico Chabod, *L'Italia contemporanea (1918-1948)*

Course Requirements

Participation in class discussion, weekly presentations and presentations for the essay (40%),
Essay (60%)

CALENDARIO DELLE LEZIONI

I Week, 1/19 War, Memory, and Experience. Introduction

Walter Benjamin, "The Storyteller"
Joanna Bourke, " 'Remembering' War"

II Week, 1/26 Avantgarde Art as War, War as Avantgarde Art

Marinetti, *Manifesto of Futurism; Technical Manifesto; Destruction of Syntax*
Eric Leed, "The Structure of the War Experience," *No Man's Land*,
Cinzia Sartini Blum, "The Rhetoric of Gender in the Manifestos" in *The Other Modernism*, 29-54

Milton Cohen, "Fatal Symbiosis" (optional)
Ernest Ialongo, *Marinetti and His Politics* (optional)

III Week, 2/2 Sublimations of Suffering: the Myth of the Aviator and the Cult of Martyrs in the Autobiographical Narrative of d'Annunzio

D'Annunzio, *Notturmo* (available online through the Rutgers libraries)
Leed, "Myth and Modern War", *No Man's Land*
Erll, "Wars We Have Seen," in *Memories and Representations of War*, 27-43

Spera, "Le forme del racconto notturno," in *D'Annunzio notturno* (optional)

IV Week, 2/9 The Languages of the Poet Soldier

Ungaretti, selections from *L'Allegria*; Saba, selections from *Military Poems* and *History and Chronicle of the Songbook*
Cooper, "Giuseppe Ungaretti's Disanimate Modernism"

Gambarota, "Beyond Revealed Religions" (optional)

V Week, 2/16 The Experience and the Great War

Lussu, *A Soldier on the Southern Front*
Leed, "War in the Labyrinth", *No Man's Land*

VI Week, 2/23 Propaganda and Illustration

Postcards and photos from WWI
Della Volpe, "Grande guerra e propaganda"
Delbello, "La cartolina postale"
Adeney Thomas, "The Evidence of Sight" (altern.)

Barthes, "The Rhetoric of the Image" (optional)

VII Week, 2/2 The Imperialist War

Flaiano, *A Time To Kill*
Luciano Marrocu, "Flaiano in Africa" in *Colonialism and National Identity*, 95-109
If I Where That Warrior (docum. film)

Trento, *From Marinetti to Pasolini* (optional)
De Donno and Srivastava, "Editorial. Colonial and Postcolonial Italy" (optional)

VIII Week, 3/9 WWII and the Russian Campaign

Rigoni-Stern, *The Sergeant in the Snow*
Jameson, "War and Representation"

SPRING BREAK

IX Week, 3/23 War Films, Between Documentary and Melodrama.

Rossellini, *The White Ship* (online)
Ruth Ben Ghiat, "Rossellini's War Trilogy"

Pietro Cavallo, "La seconda guerra mondiale in pellicola" (optional)

X Week, 3/20 Narratives of Occupation

Malaparte *The Skin*
Milan Kundera, "The Skin, Malaparte's Arch-Novel"
Clips from Rossellini, *Paisan*

Biondi, "Malaparte e le guerre" (optional)

XI Week, 4/6 Images of Occupation
Archive Photos and photos from *Life*
Film: *Naples is a Battlefield* (IWM Digital Archive)
Griffin, "The Great War Photographers"
Roth, "Photographic Ambivalence and Historical Consciousness"

II Week, 4/13 Women and the Resistance
Selections from *Resisting Bodies* 33-113
Viganò, Selections from *Partisan Wedding*
Cavani *La Donna nella Resistenza* (docum. film)

Zangrandi, *I giorni veri* (alternate)

XIII Week, 4/20 On the Other Side: The Experience of a Saló Soldier
Rimanelli, *The Day of the Lion*
Postmann, "To Hell and Back"

XIV Week, 4/27 Presentazioni dei saggi

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