



War and Experience. Twentieth-Century Narratives
16:560:657/16:195:515. Tu 2-5 pm, AB5050

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., Virilio, Benjamin, Joan Scott, Hayden White, Fussell, Leach, Barthes, Jameson), we will analyze how cultural and formal paradigms interact with lived historical events in memoirs (e.g. D'Annunzio; Jünger), fictional narratives (e.g. Lewis, Remarque, Malaparte), poems (Futurism; Hermeticism, Neo-Avantgarde), postcards, photographs, and films (e.g., Rossellini, Boulting, Patierno). Our discussion will concentrate on 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? No knowledge of Italian required.