

History 223: The First World War and the Shaping of Twentieth-Century Europe

Fall 2012

Tuesday and Thursday, 11:00-12:15

Mosse Humanities Building, 1217

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The Great War was the "seminal catastrophe" (George Kennan's words) of twentieth-century Europe. The experience of the war was linked to nearly every social, cultural, and political transformation that marked the short century that followed: mobilization and the experience of total war transformed the relations between governments and citizens, between men and women, and between social classes. Europeans experienced death on an unprecedented scale and came to terms with new forms of industrialized warfare, from the use of poison gas to modern practices of genocide. Europeans now learned to live with violence, both during as well as after the war, and found new ways to mourn or remember the dead. This course will explore such themes. Using a wide variety of contemporary sources -- memoirs, essays, poems, or cinematic representations -- we will try to situate the upheaval of 1914-1918 within the larger framework of twentieth-century European history.

Required Texts:

Books: The following books are available at the bookstore. Cheap used copies are easily found online. There are several editions of each of the first three books -- any edition is fine. Copies of the books have been placed in the College Library course reserve.

Pat Barker, *Regeneration* (1993)

Vera Brittain, *Testament of Youth* (1933)

Robert Graves, *Goodbye to all that* (1929)

Joe Lunn, *Memoirs of a Maelstrom: A Senegalese Oral History of the First World War* (Portsmouth, NH, 1999).

Course packet: A course packet is available at the Copy Center, 1650 Humanities. The relevant readings are marked by an '*' on the schedule of lectures below.

Online sources --marked by a '-' on the schedule below (go to Learn@UW → Materials → Content, or to the hyperlinks on the electronic version of the syllabus).

Requirements:

The course consists of both lectures and discussions. The success of both depends on your active participation. Read the assigned pages **before** class and bring them with you. You are required to attend all lectures.

Exams: Midterm (10/23, in class), and a final (12/19, 5:05-7:05 pm, location TBA).

Papers: 1) One 3-4 pp. paper, due 10/05 (topics TBA).

2) One 6-8 pp. paper, due 12/06. In this paper you should explore in greater depth a topic of your own choice: this could be a person, a battle, an organization, a weapon, a political party, a novel, a movie, an artistic representation... You may choose a topic we have covered in class or an entirely different one. You will need to consult additional secondary sources.

Grade structure:

Midterm:	20%
Final examination:	25%
3-4 pp. paper:	20%
6-8 pp. paper:	25%
Participation:	10%

Please note that active, constant, and collegial participation will be rewarded!

Schedule of Lectures

Week I

09/04 Introduction: Total War and the Twentieth Century

09/06 The "Road to War"

Read:

*Michael Howard, *The First World War* (Oxford, 2002), chapters 1-2, "Europe in 1914" and "The Coming of War," pp. 1-26.

Week II Nations in Arms

09/11 The "Spirit of 1914"

Read:

*Stefan Zweig, *The World of Yesterday* (1942), chapter 9, "The First Hours of the War of 1914," pp. 214-237.

*Filippo Marinetti, "The War as the Catharsis of Italian Society" (November 1914)

*BLAST: The Manifesto of Vorticism (July 1914).

09/13 The Propaganda Machine

Read:

*Nicoletta Gullace, *The Blood of our Sons: Men, Women, and the Renegotiation of British Citizenship during the Great War* (New York, 2004), chapter 1, “The Rape of Belgium and Wartime Imagination,” 17-33.

[-The Bryce Committee Report on German Atrocities, Part II \(b\): “Treatment of Women and Children”.](#)

Week III Mobilization for Total War

09/18 Patterns of Mobilization

09/20 Women and Men

Read:

Book: Vera Brittain, *Testament of Youth* (at least up to page 289. You will need to finish the entire book during the semester – we will discuss it again on 11/29).

*Review the chapter from Zweig, *The World of Yesterday*.

Week IV Industrialized Warfare (I)

09/25 The New Realities of War

Read:

*Jean de Bloch, *The Future of War* (1898), part II, chapter 6, “Possible Losses in Future Wars,” 319-346.

09/27 “Humanity is Mad:” The Trenches

Read:

*Stephan Audoin-Rouzeau, *Men at War: National Sentiment and Trench Journalism during the First World War* (London, 1992), chapter 3, “Ever-Present Death,” 67-91

*War Poems: Siegfried Sassoon, “The Attack;” Wilfred Owen, “Dulce et Decorum Est” and “Mental Cases.”

Week V Industrialized Warfare (II)

10/02 Technology as Culture

Read:

*Ernst Jünger on the pilots, from *Copse 125* (1930).

10/04 History through Film: Stanley Kubrik's *Paths of Glory* (1957). Viewing in class; discussion on 10/09.

*** First paper due in class ***

Week VI The Politics of Resistance

10/09 Interpreting Mutiny and Disobedience

Read:

* Marshal Pétain on the mutinies of 1917, from his *A Crisis in Morale in the French Nation at War* (1926).

10/11 Shattered Nerves (History through Literature)

Read:

Book: Elaine Showalter, *Regeneration* (entire).

[-Peter Taylor Whiffen on the "Shot at Dawn" campaign.](#)

Week VII Home Fronts (I)

10/16 Keeping Life Going

Read:

*Belinda Davis, "Home Front: Food, Politics, and Women's Everyday Life during the First World War," in *Home/Front: The Military, War, and Gender in Twentieth-Century Germany*, 115-138 (2002), 115-138

10/18 The New Ecology of Production

Read:

*Roger Chickering, *Imperial Germany and the Great War, 1914-1918* (Cambridge, 1998), 32-40. **OR**

*Peter Gatrell, *Russia's First World War: Social and Economic History* (London, 2005), 113-124.

[-Helen Cleary on the life of Joan Williams, a British munitions worker.](#)

Week VIII Home Fronts (II)

10/25 The Regulation of Morals

10/23 **MIDTERM**

(No readings; prepare for midterm)

Week IX Nations and Citizenship

10/30 "A Terrible Beauty is Born"

Read:

*Ken Inglis, "The Australians at Gallipoli," part I, *Historical Studies* (Australia), vol. 14 no. 54 (1970), pp. 219-230.

*"Pride in the Anzacs at Gallipoli," excerpts from an article in *Argus* (1915).

*Proclamation of the Irish Republic (1916)

11/01 The Contest for Citizenship

Read:

*Steven Hause, "More Minerva than Mars: The French Women's Rights Campaign and the First World War," in *Behind the Lines: Gender and the Two World Wars*, edited by Margaret Higonnet et al. (New Haven, CT, 1987), 99-113.

- Read about the [*Suffragette \(later Britannia\)*](#), the newspaper of the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU).

Week X The Civilian's War

11/06 Occupation, Displacement, and Genocide

Read:

*Stephan Audoin-Rouzeau and Annette Becker, *14-18: Understanding the Great War* (New York, 2009), from chapter 2, "Civilians: Atrocities and Occupation," 54-69.

*Reports on the Armenian genocide (published in 1917).

11/08 War and Revolution in Russia

Read:

*Orlando Figes and Boris Kolonitskii, *Interpreting the Russian Revolution: The Language and Symbols of 1917* (New Haven, CT, 1999), from chapter 1, "The Desacralization of the Monarchy: Rumours and the Downfall of the Romanovs," pp. 9-23.

*Reports on the condition of the troops (1917).

*Lenin's April Theses (1917).

*Order N. 1 (1917).

Week XI The Great Colonial War

11/13 War of Empires

11/15 The Experience in the Colonies

Read:

Book: Joe Lunn, *Memoirs of a Maelstrom: A Senegalese Oral History of the First World War* (Introduction, chapters 1,2,5,6,7, Conclusion).

Week XII

11/20 History through Film: Abel Gance's *J'Accuse* (second version, from 1938).

11/22 *THANKSGIVING*

Week XIII The Politics of Memory

11/27 Mourning and Commemorating

11/29 Writing

Read:

Book: Robert Graves, *Good Bye to All That* (entire).

Also review Brittain, *Testament*.

Week XIV A Wounded Continent

12/04 The Search for Stability

Read:

-Mary Louise Roberts, "Samson and Delilah Revisited: the Politics of Women's Fashion in 1920s France," *American Historical Review* 98:3 (1987): 657-684.
[JSTOR]

12/06 The Politics of Discontent

Read:

*SDP appeal for a general strike, 1920

*Hindenburg on the "Stab in the Back," 1918

*** Second paper due in class***

Week XV The Great Illusion

12/11 History through Film: *La Grande Illusion* (A different viewing time will be scheduled; attendance is mandatory).

12/13 Discussion and course conclusions

(No readings; prepare for final).