

War and Memory in Twentieth Century France

History 43.338

Fall 2014

University of Massachusetts-Lowell

Professor Patrick Young

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 9:15-10:45, Thursdays 12:30-1:45, and by appointment

Course Website: <http://continuinged.uml.edu/online>

Course Description

This course will explore the individual and collective trauma of modern warfare, as that was experienced in France both during and after the country's three main wars of the twentieth century. We will above all consider how the experience of modern war has been negotiated in culture---in personal and collective memory, in gender identities and relationships, and in a great variety of written and visual texts. The course begins with World War I as the first fully modern "total war", waged in large measure on French soil and involving an unprecedented mobilization of French resources and civilian population. The course's second unit will focus on France's "strange defeat" at the hands of German Nazism in 1940, and the country's subsequent occupation, division and highly conflicted experience of collaboration/resistance during the so-called *années noires* ("dark years"). Its third and final unit will deal with the 1954-1962 War of Algerian Independence, and with the protracted violence and political fractiousness that were intrinsic to that conflict. Our main focus throughout will fall upon the challenges of coming to terms with modern war experience, whether during or after the actual conflict. To that end, the course will maintain an interdisciplinary approach encompassing critical consideration of not only historical texts, but also literary memoir, film, popular culture and architectural media such as war monuments and cemeteries.

Course Objectives

This course aims at enabling students to:

- better understand the historical impact of modern warfare in the twentieth century, in France and in the world more broadly
- employ tools of analysis from multiple disciplines in analyzing the personal and historical workings of memory
- refine specific skills in interpreting visual and literary texts as historical sources
- demonstrate measurable improvement in their writing

Course Texts

The following are required texts for the course. They are available at the University bookstore, and should be purchased there or online as soon as possible.

Supplementary readings and other vital materials such as image files will be housed on the course website. Films and film clips for the course will be made available by weblinks and/or put on reserve at the Media Center in O'Leary Library.

Course Texts

Annette Becker, Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau and Leonard Smith, eds., *France and the Great War* (Cambridge, 2003), ISBN 978-05201661768
Marguerite Duras, *The War: A Memoir* (New Press, 1994), ISBN 978-1565842212
Martha Hanna, *Your Death Would be Mine: Paul and Marie Pireaud in the Great War* (Harvard University Press, 2009) ISBN 978-0674030510
Roderick Kedward, *Occupied France: Collaboration and Resistance, 1940-1944* (Wiley-Blackwell, 1991) ISBN 978-0631139270

Course Requirements

Unit Essays and Shorter Written Work (80%)

These will correspond to each of the three main units/periods we will be covering in the course, and will require that you synthesize multiple forms of historical evidence, as well as information from reading, lecture/class discussion and the course website.

I will provide the assignments at the very beginning of each unit, in order that you may use them to guide your note taking and begin thinking out your essay well in advance

Class participation (20%)

*Please note: Late written work cannot be accepted unless arrangements are made with me in advance of the due date. Written work should also be submitted directly to me in hard copy format. The penalty for lateness is one-half letter grade per day. Let me know as soon as possible if you anticipate difficulties in handing in an assignment in time.

On Class Discussion and Participation:

This course has a discussion-based format, and requires active student participation. A formal requirement of that participation is that students assume responsibility for being a primary discussant for two classes of their choosing at some point over the course of the semester. In line with that duty, students are required to submit a one to two-page summary of that day's reading in advance to me via email, along with any questions of their own they may wish to raise for discussion.

The primary discussant work will be combined with a grade for daily participation, to produce an overall class discussion grade. Lateness and/or incomplete preparation for the discussion will lower the

participation grade, as will any more than three absences. It goes without saying as well that phone usage and texting are strictly forbidden during class.

Schedule of Classes

9/4 Course introduction: Defining the Problem, Defining the Terms

Unit One: France and la Grande Guerre

- 9/9 Background: Turn of the Century France and the Road to War
France and the Great War, chapter 1
Roland Dorgelès, “That Fabulous Day”, course website
Emilie Carles, *A Life of Her Own*, chapters 6-7, course website
- 9/11 The Home Front and French ‘War Culture’
France and the Great War, chapter 2
Martha Hanna, *Your Death Would Be Mine*, 1-77
image file, ‘French war culture’, course website
- 9/16 Gender Roles and Identities in Wartime
Charles Rearick “French Identities in the Crucible of War”, from *The French in Love and War*, course website
James McMillan, “World War I and Women in France”, from *Total War and Social Change*, course website
Martha Hanna, *Your Death Would Be Mine*, 78-175
- 9/18 The Soldiers’ War
France and the Great War, chapter 3
Alistair Horne, “The Price of Glory: Verdun, 1916,” course website
Martha Hanna, *Your Death Would Be Mine*, 176-225
- 9/23 Soldiers’ Memories and Memoirs
Leonard Smith, “Introduction: Experience, Narrative and Narrator in the Great War,” from *The Embattled Self: French Soldiers’ Testimony of the Great War*
Louis Barthes, *Poilu*, selections, course website
Martha Hanna, *Your Death Would Be Mine*, 226-300
***worksheet due**
- 9/25 Moving on From “Victory”
France and the Great War, chapters 4-5
Antoine Prost, “War Memorials of the Great War”, course website
- 9/30 War Monuments and Museums in the 1920’s

view image file, “French War Monuments and Memorials,” course website

Jay Winter, “War Memorials and the Mourning Process”, from *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, course website

George Mosse, “The Cult of the Fallen Soldier,” from *Fallen Soldiers*, course website

***worksheet due**

10/2 War and Film, “War Films”

view “Les Croix de Bois” (“Wooden Crosses”) dir. by Raymond Bernard (1932), on reserve at O’Leary Library Media Center

10/7 Confronting Old and New Battles: Renoir’s “La Grande Illusion”

view “La Grande Illusion” (“Grand Illusion”) dir. by Jean Renoir (1937), on reserve at O’Leary Library Media Center

***worksheet due**

Unit Two: *Les Années Noires*: France and World War II

10/9 France’s “Strange Defeat”: Causes and Consequences

Charles De Gaulle June-July 1940 speeches, course website

Marshall Pétain’s Message to the French People, October 11, 1940, course website

Kedward, *Occupied France*, chapter 1

***Unit One Paper due**

10/14 Occupation and the Vichy Regime

Kedward, *Occupied France*, chapters 2-3

Robert Gildea, “Cohabitation” and “Bread” from *Marianne in Chains*, course website

10/16 Everyday Life in Wartime France

Richard Vinen, “Frenchwomen and Germans,” from *The Unfree French*, course website

Robert Gildea, “Les Années Noires? Clandestine Dancing in Occupied France,” course website

10/21 Experiences, Dilemmas and Memories of Resistance

Kedward, *Occupied France*, chapters 4-5

Albert Camus, “I Am Fighting You....”, course website

Lucie Aubrac, excerpt from *Outwitting the Gestapo*, course website

***worksheet due**

10/23 Ambiguities of the Liberation

Marguerite Duras, *The War*, 3-68

Claire Duchen, “Crime and Punishment in Liberated France: The Case of the *femmes tondues*,” course website
***worksheet due**

- 10/28 The “Vichy Syndrome”: French Memory of the War Years
Henry Rousso, *The Vichy Syndrome*, “Introduction: The Neurosis”, and “Unfinished Mourning”, course website
- 10/30 Breaking the Mirror? “The Sorrow and the Pity”
“Le Chagrin et la Pitié” (“The Sorrow and the Pity”), dir. by Marcel Ophuls (1968), on reserve at O’Leary Library Media Center
Henry Rousso, *The Vichy Syndrome*, “The Broken Mirror”, course website
***worksheet due**
- 11/4 The Holocaust in France, and in French Memory
Richard Vinen, “Jews, Germans and French”, from *The Unfree French*, course website
view “Au Revoir les Enfants,” dir. by Louis Malle (1987)
François Hollande, “The Crime Committed in France, by France,” course website
- 11/6 A “Haunted Past”: Recent Dilemmas of Memory and Justice
Robert Paxton, “The Trial of Maurice Papon”, from *New York Review of Books*, course website
or
Richard Golsan, “The Trial of Paul Touvier”, from *Vichy’s Afterlife*, course website

Unit Three: The ‘War Without Name’: The Algerian Conflict and its Aftermath

- 11/13 Historical Origins of the “Algerian Conflict”
Martin Evans and John Philips, “Forced Marriage: French Algeria 1830-1962,” course website
***Unit Two paper due**
- 11/18 Ethical Dilemmas of Political Violence
Frantz Fanon, “Concerning Violence” from *Wretched of the Earth*, course website
Jean-Paul Sartre, preface to *Wretched of the Earth*, course website
Albert Camus, “The Guest”, handout
- 11/20 Algerian Experiences and Perspectives on Political Violence
Mouloud Feraoun, *Journal 1955-1962*, selections, course website
Assia Djebar, *Women of Algiers in their Apartment*, selections, course website

- 11/25 Images and Realities of War: Pontecorvo's "Battle of Algiers"
*in-class viewing of Gillo Pontecorvo, "Battle of Algiers" (1966)
- 11/26 Pontecorvo's "Battle of Algiers," continued
*in-class viewing of Gillo Pontecorvo, "Battle of Algiers" (1966)
Murray Smith, "*The Battle of Algiers: Colonial Struggle and Collective Allegiance*," course website
- 12/2 The "Question" of Torture
Henri Alleg, "The Question", course website
- 12/4 War's Aftermath, 1962-2000: Limitations of Memory?
William B. Cohen, "The Algerian War, the French State and Official Memory", course website
Martin Evans, "Rehabilitating the Traumatized War Veteran: The Case of French Conscription from the Algerian War", course website
Alec Hargreaves, "Generating Migrant Memories", course website
- 12/9 Memory and the Return of the Past
Neil MacMaster, "The Torture Controversy (1998-2002): Towards a 'New History' of the Algerian War?", course website

***Final Paper due**