

FM 209

Images of War – War of Images: Introduction to Film Studies

Seminar Leader: Matthias Hurst

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Office Hours (P 98, Room 003): Tuesday, 13.30 – 15.00, or by appointment

Course Times: Monday, 14.00 – 15.30; Monday, 19.30 – 22.00 (weekly film screening);
Wednesday, 14.00 – 15.30

Course Description

This class introduces fundamental knowledge of film aesthetics and cinematic language through a focus on the genre of the war film. Central topics are the characteristics of film as a visual form of representation, the development of film language since the beginning of the 20th century, styles of filmic discourse, and different approaches to film interpretation.

In our study of the war film genre (and its close bond to the anti-war film), we will examine the relation between the cinematic image and narrative and other conceptualizations and representations of war, with Paul Virilio's theory of the links between military technology, speed and visibility as a starting point. Among the films addressed will be *Westfront 1918* (1930, Georg Wilhelm Pabst), *Apocalypse Now* (1979, Francis Ford Coppola), *Come and See* (1985, Elem Klimov), *The Thin Red Line* (1998, Terrence Malick) and *1917* (2019, Sam Mendes). Throughout our exploration, we will examine the way in which film intervenes in political and historical discourses, promoting patriotism or exposing the horrors of conflict, and thus highlighting both the ideological and the critical function of cinema as a means of sociohistorical commentary, as well as its power to shape collective memory.

Requirements

No prerequisites.

Attendance is mandatory for all seminars and film screenings. Students are expected to come to seminars and film screenings punctually and prepared, to participate actively in the class discussions and to do all the course assignments on time.

* Please, do not use cell phones, smart phones or similar electronic devices during seminars and screenings!

Academic Integrity

Bard College Berlin maintains the highest standards of academic integrity and expects students to adhere to these standards at all times. Instances in which students fail to meet the expected standards of academic integrity will be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct, Section 14.3 (Academic Misconduct) in the Student Handbook.

Attendance

Attendance at all classes and film screenings is a crucial part of the education offered by Bard College Berlin. To account for minor circumstances, two absences from twice-per-week courses or the equivalent (e.g. one absence from a once-per-week course) should not affect the participation grade or require documentation.

More than two absences will affect the grade for the course.

Absences are registered in all classes, and lateness is registered as absence. Students should notify the instructor if they are unable to attend class.

Bard College Berlin does not offer credit for any course in which a student has missed more than 30% of classes, regardless of the reasons for the absences, whether excused or unexcused. The full Bard College Berlin attendance policy can be found in the Student Handbook, Section 2.8.

Special considerations for Spring 2022: Students must refrain from in-person attendance if they are feeling ill. The instructors will make all reasonable efforts to offer alternatives to in-person attendance where needed, including remote participation or asynchronous options.

Assessment / Writing Assignments

Individual presentations in class, based on the film screenings.

Two screening reports (1000 words each), due in week 3 (deadline for screening report # 1: Wednesday, February 16, 2022, 1.30 pm) and in week 7 (deadline for screening report # 2: Wednesday, March 16, 2022, 1.30 pm) – The topics of the screening reports will be announced.

A final essay (3000-3500 words), due in week 15, Friday, May 20, 2022, noon (12.01 pm) – The topic of the final essay will be a film analysis/interpretation, based on one of the films screened or discussed throughout the semester.

Policy on Late Submission of Papers

Essays that are up to 24 hours late can be downgraded up to one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Instructors are not obliged to accept essays that are more than 24 hours late. Where an instructor agrees to accept a late essay, it must be submitted within four weeks of the deadline. Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment.

Grades and comments will be returned to students in a timely fashion. Students are also entitled to make an appointment to discuss essay assignments and feedback during instructors' office hours.

Students receive mid- and end-of-semester grades for their seminar work. Students are entitled to make an appointment with an instructor to discuss seminar participation, or may be asked to meet with the instructor at any stage in the semester regarding class progress.

Grade Breakdown

Participation:	25 %
Screening Reports:	25 %
Presentation:	25 %
Final Essay:	25 %

If one of these components is graded F, the final course grade cannot be higher than C-.
If two components are graded F, the final grade will be F (i.e. the whole class will be failed).

Schedule

* Tentative schedule depending on official Corona policies, availability of films and students' choice of presentations

Week 1

Introduction: Images of War – War of Images

Time, Space, Speed, Visuality – Film as a cultural phenomenon, narrative art and form of social commentary (1)

No film screening in week 1!

Week 2

Images of War: Film as a cultural phenomenon, narrative art and form of social commentary (2)

Film analysis: Basic model – Story and Discourse – Character (1)

Westfront 1918 (1930, Georg Wilhelm Pabst)

All Quiet on the Western Front (1930, Lewis Milestone)

Week 3

Film analysis: Basic model – Story and Discourse – Character (2)

Structural analysis: The means and elements of filmic storytelling (1)

Primitive Mode of Representation (PMR), Cinema of Attractions

La Grande Illusion (1937, Jean Renoir)

Screening report # 1 (deadline: Wednesday, February 16, 1.30 pm)

Week 4

Structural analysis: The means and elements of filmic storytelling (2)

Mise-en-scène and montage, Institutional Mode of Representation (IMR), Cinema of Narrative Integration

Paths of Glory (1957, Stanley Kubrick)

Week 5

Structural analysis: The means and elements of filmic storytelling (3)

Descriptive Montage, Montage of Attractions, Intellectual Montage

The Longest Day (1962, Ken Annakin, Bernhard Wicki, Andrew Marton)

A Bridge Too Far (1977, Richard Attenborough)

Week 6

Film semiotics: Signs and codes; denotation and connotation of signs (1)

The Deer Hunter (1978, Michael Cimino)

Week 7

Denotation and connotation of signs (2); paradigmatic and syntagmatic connotations

Apocalypse Now – The Final Cut (1979, Francis Ford Coppola)

Platoon (1986, Oliver Stone)

Screening report # 2 (deadline: Wednesday, March 16, 1.30 pm)

Week 8

Film Presentations

*M*A*S*H* (1970, Robert Altman)

Catch 22 (1970, Mike Nichols)

Week 9

Film Presentations

Under Fire (1983, Roger Spottiswoode)
Come and See (1985, Elem Klimov)

Week 10

Film Presentations

Black Hawk Down (2001, Ridley Scott)

Spring Break: April 11 –April 16, 2022

Week 11

No class, no film screening on Monday, April 18 (Public holiday)

Film Presentations

The Thin Red Line (1998, Terrence Malick)

Week 12

Film Presentations

No Man's Land (2001, Danis Tanovic)

Week 13

Film Presentations

The Hurt Locker (2008, Kathryn Bigelow)

Week 14

Film Presentations

1917 (2019, Sam Mendes)

Week 15:

Completion Week (May 16 – 20, 2022)

Deadline for final essay (3000 – 3500 words): Friday, May 20, 2022, noon (12.01 pm)

Literature:

Allen, Richard, and Murray Smith (eds.). *Film Theory and Philosophy*. Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Allison, Tanine. *Destructive Sublime: World War II in American Film and Media*. New Brunswick/Newark/London: Rutgers University Press, 2018.

Altman, Rick. *Film/Genre*. London: British Film Institute, 2004.

Baudry, Jean-Louis. "The Apparatus: Metapsychological Approaches to the Impression of Reality in the Cinema." In: Philip Rosen (ed.). *Narrative, Apparatus, Ideology. A Film Theory Reader*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986, pp. 299-318.

Bazin, André. "The Evolution of the Language of Cinema". In: André Bazin. *What Is Cinema?* Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 1971, pp. 23-40.

Bazin, André. "The Ontology of the Photographic Image." In: André Bazin. *What Is Cinema?* Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 1971, pp. 9-16.

Bazin, André. *What is Cinema?* Vol. I & II. Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 1971.

Benjamin, Walter. "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." In: Leo Braudy / Marshall Cohen (eds.). *Film Theory and Criticism. Introductory Readings*. New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, pp. 731-751.

Bergstrom, Janet (ed.). *Endless Night. Cinema and Psychoanalysis, Parallel Histories*. Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 1999.

Blandford, Steve, Barry K. Grant and Jim Hillier. *The Film Studies Dictionary*. London/New York: Arnold, Oxford University Press, 2004.

Bordwell, David. "Classical Hollywood Cinema: Narrational Principles and Procedures." In: Philip Rosen (ed.). *Narrative, Apparatus, Ideology. A Film Theory Reader*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986, pp. 17-34.

Bordwell, David. *Narration in the Fiction Film*. London/New York: Routledge, 1990.

Braudy, Leo, and Marshall Cohen (eds.). *Film Theory and Criticism. Introductory Readings*. Seventh Edition. New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Brown, Larry A. *How Films Tell Stories. The Narratology of Cinema*. Nashville: Creative Arts Press, 2016.

Burch, Noël. "A Primitive Mode of Representation?" In: Thomas Elsaesser (ed.). *Early Cinema: Space, Frame, Narrative*. London: BFI 1990, pp. 220-227.

Carroll, Noël. *Mystifying Movies: Fads and Fallacies in Contemporary Film Theory*. New York:

Columbia University Press, 1988.

Dodd, James. *Violence and Phenomenology*. New York/London: Routledge, 2009.

Dowd, James J. *Social Life in the Movies: How Hollywood Imagines War, Schools, Romance and Social Inequality*. London/New York: Routledge, 2021.

Elsaesser, Thomas, and Warren Buckland. *Studying Contemporary American Film. A Guide to Movie Analysis*. London: Arnold Publishers, 2002.

Frampton, Daniel. *Filmosophy*. London: Wallflower Press, 2006.

Freud, Sigmund. "The 'Uncanny'." In: *Art and Literature. Jensen's Gradiva, Leonardo da Vinci and Other Works*. The Penguin Freud Library Vol. 14, edited by Albert Dickson. London/New York: Penguin, pp. 335-376.

Gallie, W. B. *Philosophers of Peace and War. Kant, Clausewitz, Marx, Engels and Tolstoy*. Cambridge/London/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008 [1978].

Gibbs, John. *Mise-en-Scène. Film Style and Interpretation*. London/New York: Wallflower Press 2003.

Görtschacher, Wolfgang, and Holger Klein (eds.). *Modern War on Stage and Screen / Der moderne Krieg auf der Bühne*. Lewiston/Queenston/Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press, 1997.

Gunning, Tom. "The Cinema of Attractions. Early Film, Its Spectator and the Avant-Garde." [1986] In: Thomas Elsaesser (ed.). *Early Cinema: Space, Frame, Narrative*. London: BFI 1990, pp. 56-62.

Hammon, Michael. *The Great War in Hollywood Memory 1918-1939*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2019.

Hayward, Susan. *Cinema Studies. The Key Concepts*. Third Edition. London/New York: Routledge, 2006.

Hill, John, and Pamela Church Gibson (eds.). *The Oxford Guide to Film Studies*. Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Hockley, Luke. *Cinematic Projections. The Analytic Psychology of C .G. Jung and Film Theory*. Luton: University of Luton Press, 2001.

Indick, William. *Movies and the Mind. Theories of the Great Psychoanalysts Applied to Film*. Jefferson/NC: McFarland & Company, 2004.

Joas, Hans. *War and Modernity*. Cambridge/Oxford: Polity Press/Blackwell Publishing, 2003.

Jung, Carl Gustav, and Marie-Luise von Franz (eds.). *Man and His Symbols*. New York: Dell Publishing/Random House, 1968.

Jung, Carl Gustav. *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*. Second Edition. London: Routledge, 1990.

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- Kelly, Andrew. *Cinema and the Great War*. London/New York; Routledge, 1997.
- Koppes, Clayton R., and Gregory D. Black. *Hollywood Goes to War. How Politics, Profits, and Propaganda Shaped World War II Movies*. New York/London: The Free Press/Macmillan Publishers, 1987.
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- Lebeau, Vicky. *Psychoanalysis and Cinema. The Play of Shadows*. London: Wallflower Press, 2002.
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- Nowell-Smith, Geoffrey (ed.). *The Oxford History of World Cinema*. Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.
- Panofsky, Erwin. "Style and Medium in the Motion Pictures." [1934/1947] In: Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen (eds.). *Film Theory and Criticism. Introductory Readings*. New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, pp. 279-292.

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Essay Deadlines

Deadline for screening report # 1 (1000 words): Week 3, Wednesday, February 16, 2022, 1.30 pm

Deadline for screening report # 2 (1000 words): Week 7, Wednesday, March 16, 2022, 1.30 pm

Deadline for final essay (3000-3500 words): Week 15, Friday, May 20, 2022, noon (i.e. 12.01 pm)