

# HIST 31672: THE AFTERMATH OF WAR IN FRANCE, BRITAIN AND GERMANY

## Violence and Reconstruction after the First and Second World Wars

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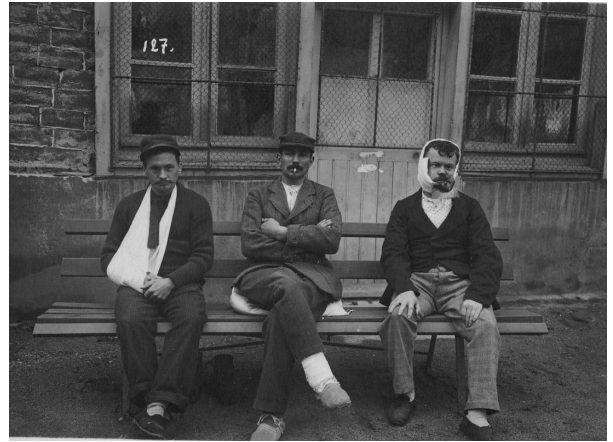
Tuesday 13 June, 1-2 pm  
<https://zoom.us/j/92142409680>  
Meeting ID: 921 4240 9680

### OUTLINE OF THE COURSE

Integrating recent historiographical developments, this course considers the aftermath of the First World War and Second World War in a comparative perspective. It explores how Western European societies 'got out of the war' socially and culturally speaking, how wartime attitudes were gradually dismantled and how 'ordinary' citizens came to terms with the war. The primary focus is on Britain, France and Germany.

### AIMS

- To encourage critical engagement with key concepts in the cultural and social history of the transition from war to peace and introduce major debates in the historiography;
- To develop a nuanced understanding of the distinction between the 'wartime' and 'post-war' periods,
- To highlight continuities of experiences beyond the conclusion of hostilities and the diplomatic agreements that often define the end of warfare in the historical consciousness.



French veterans, Archives Départementales de l'Allier. (A. D. Allier, 9 J 69).

### FIELD TRIP – 'LET'S WOMEN MAKE PEACE'

In week 3, we are going to the John Rylands' Library to examine key archival documents from the London Office of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance (IWSA), an international association created in 1902. This workshop is designed to help you for your Level 3 dissertation.

He dies all alone, over there, like a dog... And this is horrible, pitiful death we call 'death of the field of honour'! What irony!... Where are the honours we pay to that poor unknown who will not even have a coffin for his eternal rest?... He will lie for days and days, forgotten, on the bare earth, with a smashed skull or chest, and Germans crows will steal away his dearest memories. Nothing! He will have nothing. Not even a pauper's grave, not even a stone, not even a cross. All of this is too little for Him who died on the Field of Honour. Christ could be resurrected from the tomb, for he had a tomb. As for him, He will have the earth, like the animals.

Françoise Vitry *Journal d'une veuve de guerre* (Paris: La maison française d'art et d'édition, 1919), pp. 56-57.



Käthe Kollwitz, *The Widow II (Die Witwe II)* (plate 5) from *War (Krieg)*, published in 1923, MoMa New York.

## WEEKLY TOPICS

Week 1: The Aftermath of the First World War:

Approaches and Debates

Week 2 : Ending the war? The Paris Peace

Conference in 1919

Week 3: 'Let Women Make Peace': Women's

Transnational Activism

Week 4 : Coming out of War: Demobilisation, Paramilitarism and Extreme Violence

Week 5: Life After Death: Family and Mourning

Week 6 : The Aftermath: a turning point in the

history of Humanitarianism?

Week 7: The Aftermath of the Second World War:

Approaches and Debates

Week 8: Violence, Hunger and Victimhood in the

German Rubble

Week 9: Punishing wartime collaborators:

Retribution, purges, transnational justice

Week 10: Expulsion, Displacement and

Humanitarianism

Week 11 : Coming 'Home' and Rebuilding Family

Life

## INDICATIVE PRIMARY SOURCES

### ARCHIVES

IWSA archives

### FILMS:

*Le Retour* (Henri Cartier-Bresson, 1945)

*Brief Encounter* (David Lean, 1945)

*A defeated People* (Humphrey Jennings, 1946)

*Germany, Year Zero* (Roberto Rossellini, 1948)

*The Search* (Fred Zinnemann, 1948)

## EMPLOYABILITY

You will acquire the following transferable skills:

- Analytical and intellectual skills (critical analysis of legal, sociological, medical texts and visual sources, including photography and film);
- Presentation skills and interpersonal skills (through group works);
- Research skills (insights into the issues of both short-term and long term humanitarian responses to displacement).

## FORMAL ASSESSMENT

A 1,500 word Primary Source Commentary (30%)

A 3000-word research essay (70%)

## INDICATIVE READINGS

Bessel, Richard and Schumann, Dirk (eds) *Life after Death: Approaches to a cultural and social history of Europe during the 1940s and 1950s* (Cambridge University Press, 2003).

Cabanes, Bruno '1919, an aftermath' in Jay Winter (ed) *The Cambridge History of the First World War* (Cambridge University Press, 2013), Chapter 7, pp. 172-198.

Judt, Tony *Postwar: A history of Europe since 1945* (Penguin Press, 2005).

Mazower, Mark *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century* (Penguin, 1998).



Henri Cartier-Bresson, Dessau, April 1945, Germany.