

War, the Body, and Communities

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The GSA interdisciplinary network „War and Violence“ brings together scholars concerned with aspects of the field of war and violence studies. The network focuses on interdisciplinary approaches combining the fields of literary studies, history, and visual studies. Methodologically it concentrates on theories of warfare, historiography of war, poetic and narrative theory, and political philosophy.

War experiences and legacies can affect individual bodies and broader communities; war can traumatize bodies as it simultaneously destroys and builds communities. Thus, war can contribute to different narratives about the body in relation to conflict and violence. This panel series explored these themes which include the disciplining of bodies for war, the visual representation of war bodies, and the bodily practices of war in history, literature, and visual media. These individual representations informed wartime communities; communities are understood in this context as dynamic entities, constructed by common encounters, attitudes, and emotions and can include victims, mourners, widows, protesters, veterans, survivors or perpetrators. In conclusion, the papers of this series explored how war can build and undermine „war communities“ and how aesthetic and historical works about war and body can shape a sense of community.

The first panel, titled „Militarizing Bodies, Shaping Collectives, and Counter-Memory“, was moderated by KATHRIN MAURER (Odense). The papers shared the view that war is fundamentally embodied, both in terms of potential death tolls and how far war shapes representations of the body (such as the bodily construction of heroes, sol-

diers, and enemies). MARTIN BORKOWSKI-SARUHAN (Göttingen) focused on the aspect of wartime community, his paper addressed the role of sports during National Socialism in East Upper Silesia. Central for his talk was the idea of „Eigensinn“, which he attributed to the ways how soccer players in occupied space in Upper Silesia managed to undermine the community building processes propagated by the National Socialists. He argued a study of team sports illustrated how local allegiances often undercut national ones. The paper by ELENA KOROWIN (Freiburg) examined the work by Käthe Kollwitz as a form of anti-militarizing body practice. Kollwitz's representations of the female body reflected the losses and horrors of war and shaped a kind of anti-heroic counter-memory. Korowin highlighted Kollwitz's very own „emotional“ style portraying the female body, which in turn made her work distinct from contemporary artists such as George Grosz. Central for Korowin's analysis was also the aspect of political instrumentalization of Kollwitz's work and the representation of the female body in this context. The commentary was given by SUSANNE VEES GULANI (Cleveland). In respect to Borkowski-Saruhan's paper, she raised the question of the reception of these soccer players and how the National Socialist reacted to them. In respect to the paper on Kollwitz, Gulani discussed whether the artist disapproved approaches that showed the ugly side of war (such as in Grosz). Gulani noted the papers based on the common focus of the individual struggling to survive and process war time, but posed the question in how far scholars can generalize the individual representations of war time suffering, and label them into universal styles and narratives.

The second panel „Visual Renderings: War, Body, and the Image“ was moderated by DAVID WILDERMUTH (Shippensburg). Visual depictions of war often center on the representation of the body. Besides being a vehicle for propaganda, images of war can shed light on the deformation, change, and fragility of the body during wartime. This panel focused on film, paintings, and drawings from World War I to the Weimar Republic. AMANDA RANDALL's (Northfield) talk

focused on the representation of the female figure in Walter Paps's film *Westfront*, and how the images of women provoke a memory of war trauma beyond that of the battle survivors. These anti-war sentiments were also key in the paper by ANNE MURRAY (Cork), which analyzed Otto Dix's paintings. Dix portrayed soldiers in an unheroic fashion, thus dismantling the horrors and absurdities of war and violence during World War I. These two papers provided an interesting counterpoint to CAROLYN KAY's (Peterborough) research on children's drawings. Carolyn Kay investigated in her talk German wartime propaganda and pedagogy from 1914-1916, which influenced young schoolchildren to create drawings and paintings of German soldiers. In this art, the children drew bodies of German soldiers as tough, heroic, on the move, armed with powerful weapons, and part of a superior military movement; their enemies embodied disorder, backwardness, ineptitude, and deadly weakness. The commentator KATHRINE AASLESTAD (Morgantown) discussed how the body can be used as a screen for propaganda in different ideological contexts. In reference to Kay, she raised the question whether the children's artwork and their glorification of war nevertheless can be seen as expressions of the trauma and anxiety related to wartime civilian life and absent fathers. Concerning Murray's paper, she asked whether the National-Socialist reception of Dix's work disapproved the representation of broken men or whether they saw his art as a commentary of the war's destructive force. Regarding Randall's paper, Aaslestad inquired about popular responses to this film by contemporary women in 1930, and if critics directed any special condemnation toward the film's female characters – or if women were simply ignored as minor figures.

The third panel „Bodily Practices, Postures, and Metaphors of Pain“ was moderated by Kathrine Aaslestad. This session aimed to investigate how war can be expressed and articulated beyond discursive forms of representation. Politicians as well as artists often struggle with the problems of representing war trauma, and this panel gave examples for performative approaches to depict and mark the atrocities of war. The paper by KARSTEN

LICHAU (Berlin) treated the early history of the minute's silence and the failed attempt at introducing it into Weimar Germany's memorial culture. The minute's silence was established as a ceremony in commemoration of the soldiers killed during World War I. His paper pointed out that the minute of silence, on one hand sought to commemorate war by framing a national community and create an acoustically and emotionally unified political community. On the other hand, it could also undermine and destablize war communities since the minute's silence as a performative gesture could incite memories about the suffering of war. The paper by CHIEDOZIE MICHEAL UHUEGBU (Nashville) investigated corporeal responses to war by analyzing Ernst Jünger's diary writings on World War I. Uhuegbu read Jünger's diary as an expression of embodied traumatic memory, which gives the reader access to the experience of violence and war. This embodied memory no longer presents itself in the realm of discursive language, but rather in an affective discourse of emotions, feelings, and traumatic experiences. KASINA ENTZI (Bloomington) analyzed the representation of war beyond discursive language. Entzi proposed that Jünger's poetic language highlights affective intensities of war experiences, which in turn aestheticizes war as a power of nature. Her thesis was that, although Jünger's prose in many ways affirms violence and naturalizes the aesthetics of war, his poetic and affective language also exudes a critical perspective on war. She connected Jünger's writings to the politics of emotions in Sara Ahmed's theories and proposed the idea that Jünger's poetics can be understood as a form of political emancipation in her talk. ELLEN PILSWORTH (Bristol) presented the poetry by the eighteenth-century poet Anna Louisa Karsch. Whereas Karsch's writing is commonly associated as patriotic poetry, this paper showed that by close reading the metaphors of wounds, the literary texts express fears, anxiety, and pains about the Seven Year's War. Pilsworth pointed out that the engagement with wounds stimulates a poetic role play that fostered an imaginary quality of war, which in turn also shed light on issue of gender and female forms of writing about war

during the eighteenth century. The commentator Kathrin Maurer discussed the aspect of ambivalence in Lichau's paper, and how precisely the community shaping aspect is fostered by the minute of silence. In respect to Uhuegbu's paper, Maurer was skeptical about the presumed authenticity in Jünger's writing and whether one can read his war diaries as evidence of trauma. Further, she problematized his project to see Jünger's prose as a form of embodied trauma as his writings also glorify the atrocities of war. This aspect of the aestheticization of war was also discussed in respect to Entzi's paper and Maurer pointed to the problem that this kind of reading could lead to a celebration and glorification of violence, which is rather diametrically opposed to Ahmed's politics of emotions. Lastly, responding to Pilsworth, Maurer raised the question whether the imaginary of war, which is often first noted in the nineteenth century in the context of the Napoleonic wars, was already prominent in eighteenth-century literature and whether Karsch's poetry could be seen as a form of female war imagination.

The fourth and final panel, „Monarchy: Influence on Military Communities and Beyond“, moderated by UTE PLANERT (Cologne), explored the dynastic loyalty that sustained military communities during hardships of war and the post-war innovation of state-building. RITA KREUGER (Philadelphia) presented a paper that featured the exploits of Franz von der Trenck, a ruthless soldier, who led the group of „Pandurs“ whom he recruited in the Balkans, into the service of Maria Theresa during the Silesian War. In contrast to 18th-century limited and stylized warfare, Kreuger highlighted Trenck's guerilla warfare and brutal marauding violence. Like Kreuger, ALEX BURNS' (Morgantown) presentation raised questions about conventional understandings of 18th-century warfare and common soldiers. Burns emphasized that soldierly patriotism was a strong feature of Frederick the Great's army during the Seven Years' War. By examining letters that Frederick's common soldiers wrote home to their families, he concluded that these soldiers were bound by emotional ties to the king. He also added that Frederick enhanced and contributed to these bonds of affection by

participating in reproduced rituals of familiarity with his men to cultivate and retain loyalty among his soldiers. Burns argued that Frederick's appeals to his soldier's family and home connections – reflected in the soldier's letters – demonstrated that Frederick tapped into the cosmology of his common soldiers. The final paper presented by GAVIN WIENS (Toronto) explored bonds of national sentiment in South German states shortly after the unification of Germany in 1871. He analyzed the role of Crown Prince Frederick William as inspector general of one of the German army's four „inspectorates“, which included corps from Prussia as well as Württemberg and Bavaria. ROGER CHICKERING (Washington D.C.) provided the comments for this panel and pointed out that they called into question the „master narrative“ of military history by exploring the nature of the moral cohesion of armies in central Europe.

The call for papers from the War and Violence network for the forty-third German Studies Association Conference to be held in Portland, Oregon in 2019 will invite contributions that focus on war and technology. The theme „War and Technology“ includes its representation in aesthetics – film, literature, and visual art – and its practices across history. The network supports a broad understanding of technology, which includes the military hardware of warfare from the medieval era to modern digital technologies – from crossbows, to cannons, to bombs, to drones. Papers can also explore the consequences of war technology on the course of conflicts, society and political power. Furthermore, technology can also be examined as *Kulturtechnik*, which comprises images, narratives, films, and other culturally produced representations. War technologies and their human agents, therefore, can shape cultural imagination, modes of perceiving the world, experiences, images, and narratives. In conclusion, the theme war technologies is loaded with many layers of discourse, rich historical experiences, and political, ideological, and representational agendas.

Conference Overview:

Panel 101: Militarizing Bodies, Shaping Collectives, and Counter-Memory

Moderator: Kathrin Maurer (University of Southern Denmark, Odense)

Commentator: Susanne Vees-Gulani (Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland)

Martin Borkowski-Saruhan (Georg-August-University of Göttingen): Exporting *Volkskörper*: Sports, Violence, and Everyday Life in Nazi-Occupied East Upper Silesia

Elena Korowin (Brigitte-Schlieben-Lange Program Fellow, Freiburg im Breisgau): 'I want to work in these Times': Käthe Kollwitz and the Female Anti-War Iconography

Panel 148: Visual Renderings: War, Body, and the Image

Moderator: David Wildermuth (Shippensburg University)

Commentator: Katherine Aaslestad (WVU, Morgantown)

Amanda Randall (St. Olaf College, Northfield): *Ich bin doch ein Mensch; ich bin doch eine Frau*: Pacifist Indexicalities of the Female Figure in Westfront 1918

Anne Murray (University College Cork): Memorialising World War I: Otto Dix's Metropolis and the Reconfiguration of Militant Masculinity

Carolyn Kay (Trent University, Peterborough): War, the Body, and the Child: German Children's Drawings of War 1914

Panel 155: Bodily Practices, Postures, and Metaphors of Pain

Moderator: Katherine Aaslestad (WVU, Morgantown)

Commentator: Kathrin Maurer (University of Southern Denmark, Odense)

Karsten Lichau (Max Planck Institute of Human Development, Berlin): The Birth of the Minute's Silence from the Spirit of War

Chiedozie Michael Uhuegbu (Vanderbilt University, Nashville): Recreating the Nightmares of the World War I through Ernst Jünger's 1917 *Kriegstagebuch*

Kasina Entzi (Indiana University, Bloomington): Soldier Bodies + Feelings at the Front: On the Effects and Affects of War"

Ellen Pilsworth (University of Reading, Bristol): *Vom Gehirn noch warm, zerfleischt*

das Schwert die Eingeweide: Imagined War Wounds in the Poems of Anna Louisa Karsch (1760–62)

Panel 224: Monarchy: Influence on Military Communities and Beyond

Moderator: Ute Planert (University of Cologne)

Commentator: Roger Chickering (Georgetown University, Washington D.C.)

Alexander Burns (West Virginia University, Morgantown): 'God and Frederick still Live': Bonds of Affection and Respect among Common Soldiers toward Frederick II

Rita Krueger (Temple University, Philadelphia): Monarchs and their Mercenaries: The Trenches in the Age of Revolution

Gavin Wiens (University of Toronto): An Unlikely National Hero: Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm as Inspector General of the South German Contingents of the German Army, 1871-1888

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