



War, Film, and History: War in Europe, 1939-1945

Spring 2015, Block 3

Room A.324

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Film has a powerful effect on the way we understand history, and particularly the history of war. In this course, we study a selection of films that deal directly or indirectly with war: we explore the relationship between the past and its representation in film. This is not a “film course” per se; our goal is to set these films in their contemporaneous context, examine them as (problematic) historical works in their own right and compare them to conventional historical approaches.

Our focus this block is on the Second World War. Our films fall into three rough sections: one dealing with Germany and the Soviet Union at war; another dealing with resistance and collaboration in wartime France; and the last dealing with the collapse of the Thousand-Year Reich.

As always, the syllabus is subject to change. Please keep an eye on the announcements section of CHP for any changes.

List of films

- *Alexander Nevsky*, directed by Sergei M. Eisenstein and Dmitriy Vasilev. 1938.
- *The Cranes are Flying*, directed by Mikhail Kalatozov. 1957.
- *Stalingrad*, directed by Joseph Vilsmaier. 1993.
- *Come and See*, directed by Elem Klimov. 1985.
- *Conspiracy*, directed by Frank Pierson. 2001.
- *The Army of Shadows*, directed by Jean-Pierre Melville. 1969.
- *Lacombe, Lucien*, directed by Louis Malle. 1974.
- *The Sorrow and the Pity*, directed by Marcel Ophüls. 1972.
- *Au Revoir Les Enfants*, directed by Louis Malle. 1987.
- *The Bridge*, directed by Bernhard Wicki. 1961.
- *Downfall*, directed by Oliver Hirschbiegel. 2004.
- *Lore*, directed by Cate Shortland, 2012.
- *Catch-22*, directed by Mike Nichols, 1970; or the *Third Man*, 1949.

Films will be screened in the media room (A.119).

Film times:

Monday, 6 p.m.

Tuesday, 1 p.m. (during class; class will meet in the media room).

Wednesday 8:30 p.m.

Thursday, 6 p.m. (but not on March 12)

Friday, 9:30 a.m. (only on Friday, March 13)

If you cannot make a particular screening, it is your responsibility to make sure you see the film before class.

Books

Books for the course are *not* available through the bookstore. You should be able to contain copies through amazon.com, amazon.ca, powells.com, abebooks.ca / abebooks.com. I'm not endorsing any of these, of course. You might also note that these books are available in electronic formats. You do not need a dedicated device (i.e., a Nook or a Kindle) to read books this way. Amazon produces Kindle software for Windows, Mac, IOS, and Android; Nook software (Barnes and Noble) is available on the Mac, IOS, and Windows (and possibly Android). (Real books are, to my mind, preferable — but the electronic versions will do.)

Parker, R. A. C. *The Second World War: A Short History*. Revised edition. Oxford University Press, 2001. Available for Kindle on Amazon.com and Amazon.ca. (Useful overview — provides broad context for the war.)

Paxton, Robert O. *Vichy France: Old Guard and New Order 1940-1944*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1975. Available for Kindle on Amazon.com and, from February 18, on Amazon.ca. (A masterpiece. Provides a still-powerful analysis of the problems of defeat and collaboration in France.)

Snyder, Timothy. *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin*. First Trade Paper Edition edition. New York: Basic Books, 2012. Available for Kindle on Amazon.com and Amazon.ca. A new, incisive, and fairly grim look at what Snyder calls the “Bloodlines”: the regions in Eastern Europe that were the stomping grounds of totalitarian regimes.

These should be on reserve in the Quest library.

Yet more things to read

There are enormous bodies of literature on the Second World War and on every aspect of film making, viewing, and analysis. Our library has some good resources, including electronic access to some first-rate film journals.

One of my favorites is the British Film Institute’s journal *Sight & Sound*—but, alas, we only have access from 2000 forward through our databases.

Written work

FILM JOURNAL

You will keep a formal journal; take careful notes for each film we view.

You will use these notes in our breakout discussions, and you will be asked to turn your journal in at the end of the course. The journal is pass-fail, but you must *keep, complete, and turn it in* on Tuesday, March 24, to pass the course.

You must *revise* one film journal entry at the end of each week. Take into account not only what you saw when you watched the film, but the discussion of the film in class. This is a formal paper, using proper and complete references. These revised journals will be due by 5 pm on each Friday of the block. Please send them to me at ajl@questu.ca.

Turning in the revised journal entry:

Your email subject should be **<Your Last Name> <First Name> Revised journal <Name of film>**.

Your review should be in .doc, .docx, or .rtf format

The name of that attachment should also be **<Your Last Name> <First Name> Revised journal <Name of film>**.

ESSAYS

You will write three essays (roughly five pages, double spaced) based on your readings and the films. Your task here is to devise a framework for discussing the films we have studied, to identify a theme, problem, or issue with the films taken together, and to think about how they shape, modify, or distort or understanding of the history of the Second World War.

Rough drafts of those papers will be due at the *beginning* of class every Monday; final drafts of those papers will be due every Tuesday by 6 pm.

Discussion and participation

While everyone is expected to watch films attentively, to take notes, and all the other things that good students should do when preparing for class, you will have special responsibilities: for each film, four students will be responsible for “plot”: those students will have a special responsibility to keep discussion groups on track about who did what to whom, to keep characters straight, and so

on. Four other students will have a special burden of keeping a sense of the “history” of each film. Their task is to keep track of the context for the film’s events: when, where, under what historical circumstances is something supposed depicted in the film supposed to have happened.

Assignment weights:

Journal: pass/fail; required. (In other words, if a student who does not turn in the journal cannot pass the course.)

Revised journal entry papers: 20% total.

Essays: 60 % total.

Contribution to discussion leadership / general participation: 20%.

Schedule

Texts: “Parker,” “Snyder,” and “Paxton” refer to the books assigned for the course. Other readings on the syllabus (Rouso, Grossman, etc.) will be posted on CHP.

Date	Texts for today’s discussion	Film for today’s discussion	Date and time of screening
Mon, Mar 2, 2015	Parker, 1-71		
Tue, Mar 3, 2015	Snyder, Preface: Europe; vii-xix; 1-The Soviet Famines; 2-Class Terror (1-87); pay attention to maps.	<i>Alexander Nevsky</i>	Mon, Mar 2, 2015 6:00 PM
Wed, Mar 4, 2015	Snyder, 3-National Terror; 4-Molotov-Ribbentrop Europe; 5-The Economics of Apocalypse (88-186)	<i>The Cranes are Flying</i>	Tue, Mar 3, 2015 1:00 PM
Thu, Mar 5, 2015	Grossman (from <i>Russia</i>) Snyder, Chapters 6-Final Solution; 7-Holocaust and Revenge (187-252)	<i>Stalingrad</i>	Wed, Mar 4, 2015 8:30 PM
Fri, Mar 6, 2015	Parker, chs. 5-9 (focus particularly on 7, 9)	<i>Come and See</i>	Thu, Mar 5, 2015 6:00 PM
Mon, Mar 9, 2015	Snyder, 8-The Nazi Death Factories; 9-Resistance and Incineration (253-312)		
Tue, Mar 10, 2015	(Begin reading Paxton) Parker, chs-10-12	<i>Conspiracy</i>	Mon, Mar 9, 2015 6:00 PM
Wed, Mar 11, 2015	Rouso, 3-The Broken Mirror; Paxton, Prologue; I-The Quest for Collaboration, 1940-1942	<i>The Sorrow and the Pity, part 1</i>	Tue, Mar 10, 2015 1:00 PM
Thu, Mar 12, 2015	Paxton, II-The National Revolution	<i>The Sorrow and the Pity, part 2</i>	Wed, Mar 11, 2015 8:30 PM
Fri, Mar 13, 2015	Paxton, III-The Collaborators	<i>The Army of Shadows</i>	Fri, Mar 13, 2015 9:30 AM
Mon, Mar 16, 2015	Paxton, IV-Collaboration, 1942-44		
Tue, Mar 17, 2015	Paxton, V-A Balance Sheet	<i>Lacombe, Lucien</i>	Mon, Mar 16, 2015 6:00 PM
Wed, Mar 18, 2015	Parker, chs. 13-15	<i>Au Revoir Les Enfants</i>	Tue, Mar 17, 2015 1:00 PM
Thu, Mar 19, 2015		<i>The Bridge</i>	Wed, Mar 18, 2015 8:30 PM

Date	Texts for today's discussion	Film for today's discussion	Date and time of screening
Fri, Mar 20, 2015	Parker, chs. 16-18	<i>Downfall</i>	Thu, Mar 19, 2015 6:00 PM
Mon, Mar 23, 2015	Snyder, 10-Ethnic Cleansings		
Tue, Mar 24, 2015	Snyder, 11-Humanity	<i>Lore</i>	Mon, Mar 23, 2015 6:00 PM
Wed, Mar 25, 2015		<i>Catch-22</i> (or the <i>Third Man</i>)	Tue, Mar 24, 2015 1:00 PM

Expectations

This is a *concentration-level* history class. To do well in this course, you must have viewed the films attentively, read the assigned material, have thought about both, and be prepared to a significant contribution to class discussion.

There are no formal subject prerequisites for the course, but there are some guiding assumptions about what you *already know*, what *you want to do*, what you *know how to do*, and what you are *willing to do*.

Assumptions about you

What you already know:

- Broad outlines of history
- Basic world geography

What you know how to do:

- Write university-level essays. This includes structure, grammar, mechanics, and so on. (Help with this is available from the Learning Commons.)
- Properly cite sources in at least one standard format (MLA, APA, or Chicago/Turabian). We will use the Chicago/Turabian footnote/bibliography style in this course. (While we will spend a short time reviewing the principles and practice of citation, *you* are responsible for making sure that you cite properly.)
- Use basic library resources (catalog, periodical databases).
- Use the Learning Commons to get support.

What you want to do:

- Be in this class
- Learn something about the way that historians *think* of their discipline.
- Understand the diversity of historical approaches.
- Learn something about the way that historians *practice* their craft.

What you are *willing to do*:

- Attend class. Failure to attend may have dire consequences, including preclusion from the course. A less formal, but just as serious, consequence is that those who do not attend fail to

teach and learn from their colleagues. In exceptional (and documented) cases, an absence may be excused on medical or compassionate grounds.

- Keep up with the work in the course.
- Read (and view) intensively and carefully. As a courtesy to your fellow students and your tutor, please do all the reading *before* the seminar.
- Look up terms and concepts that you do not understand. (You may be asked about the meaning and significance of terms in the reading.)
- Identify the central arguments of each text you read.
- Explain what you know to other students.
- Rigorously and intelligently challenge the assumptions made and the conclusions drawn by other members of the class (including your tutor).
- Go beyond the texts assigned for the course: make use of the library and other resources to expand your horizons. (This also means using what you know about other films to help illuminate what's going on with the films we are studying.)
- Write carefully, thoughtfully, and seriously. Arguments should be clear, logical, and well supported. Expression matters. Writing clearly and correctly makes your content accessible and your ideas intelligible.
- Re-write. Good writing, you will scarcely need to be reminded, is *re-writing*.
- Complete all the assignments on time.
- Give credit where credit is due, both in discussion and in your writing.

Absences

There are — infrequently — valid reasons to miss class: illness, family emergencies, war, famine, pestilence, and so forth. If you have a really good reason for missing class, your case will be stronger if you notify your tutor *before* you miss class. You are in any event responsible for obtaining notes, handouts, and assignments. Missing class without a valid excuse may result in an “F.”

You must complete all assignments.

Failure to hand in all assignments will result in an “F” for the course. (This includes the journal, which must be turned in – complete—on the last day of the course.)

Academic integrity

As the Quest University Calendar notes, “Quest is committed to the principle of academic integrity, itself grounded in the fundamental values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility in all academic work.” We depend on the honesty and responsibility of all of our members — scholars and teachers alike.

In keeping with the Quest Honour Principle, you will do your own work, and you will conscientiously and meticulously credit sources. Citing sources is not optional in academic work — it is a fundamental principle. As you should know, plagiarism is, broadly speaking, passing off someone else work or ideas as your own, failing to properly identify and credit the source of material you submit, or using cited material improperly. Please be aware that failure to observe the rules of citation will result in charges of plagiarism or academic dishonesty.

Charges of plagiarism or of academic dishonesty are not taken lightly, and may have dire consequences: failure on the assignment, failure of the course, and worse. To avoid this sort of unpleasantness, please be sure to read “University Policies: Quest Honour Principle and Protocol” in the University Calendar. If you have questions about citation, crediting sources, or anything else relating to academic integrity, please ask before you turn in the work. (Information about plagiarism can also be obtained from the Learning Commons.)

If the principle of citation is the same across academic disciplines, the particular format of citation varies from discipline to discipline, and even within disciplines. The preferred practice in this course will be to use the Chicago Footnote/Bibliography style.

Miscellaneous

Please do not use phones, computers, Gameboys, or other electronic devices for any purpose other than class-specific work. Because some of you will have the texts in electronic format, we’re likely to have a wall of screens up – but try to remember that the wall of screens is distracting and distancing. Laptops should not be used in class unless there’s a good and specific reason for that use.

Please do not eat food in class. (This is not a moral issue – it’s about rodents and other unpleasant creatures.)

Please do not leave in the middle of class. If it’s really time for a break, then perhaps a gentle and courteous request to the tutor is appropriate.