

War Beyond Words

What we know of war is always mediated knowledge and feeling. We need lenses to filter out some of its blinding, terrifying light. These lenses are not fixed; they change over time, and Jay Winter's panoramic history of war and memory offers an unprecedented study of transformations in our imaginings of war, from 1914 to the present. He reveals the ways in which different creative arts have framed our meditations on war, from painting and sculpture to photography, film, and poetry, and ultimately to silence, as a language of memory in its own right. He shows how these highly mediated images of war, in turn, circulate through language to constitute our "cultural memory" of war. This is a major contribution to our understanding of the diverse ways in which men and women have wrestled with the intractable task of conveying what twentieth-century wars meant to them and mean to us.

Jay Winter is Charles J. Stille Professor of History Emeritus at Yale University and Distinguished Visiting Professor at Monash University. He won an Emmy award as coproducer of the BBC/PBS television series *The Great War and the Shaping of the 20th Century* (1996) and is a founder of the *Historial de la grande guerre*, an international museum of the Great War inaugurated in 1992. He is the author of *Sites of Memory*, *Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (1995), editor of *America and the Armenian Genocide* (2008), and editor-in-chief of the three-volume *Cambridge History of the First World War* (2014).

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Languages of Remembrance from the Great War to the Present

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For Petra

And who will remember the rememberers?

...

How does a monument come into being?

...

And what is the best time for remembering? At noon
when shadows are hidden beneath our feet, or at twilight
when shadows lengthen like longings
that have no beginning, no end, like God?

*Yehuda Amichai, "And who will remember the
rememberers?"¹*

¹ Yehuda Amichai, *Open closed open*, trans, by Chana Block (New York: Mariner Books, 2006)

Contents

List of Illustrations page x
List of Figures and Tables xvi
Acknowledgments xviii

Introduction 1

Part I: Vectors of Memory 7

- 1** Configuring War: The Changing Face of Armed Conflict 9
 - Mediations: Otto Dix and the Great War 17
 - Death Descends from the Skies 18
 - Empty Spaces 21
 - Blurred Faces: Gerhard Richter 27

- 2** Photographing War: Soldiers' Photographs and the Revolution in Violence since 1914 35
 - Photographing the New Face of War 39
 - 1914: The Pocket Camera Arrives 41
 - Cadavers 44
 - War Photography after the Great War 59
 - The *Studium* and the *Punctum*: Frameworks of Meaning 61
 - Captions 67

viii / Contents

- 3** Filming War 69
 Phases of War Film History 70
 Metonym or Metaphor 73
 Silent Film 76
 Trajectories 82
 Dignity without Voyeurism 88

- 4** Writing War 92
 Paths of Glory 92
 Contrasts 100
 The Afterlife of Glory 110

Part II: Frameworks of Memory 119

- 5** Memory and the Sacred: Martyrdom in the Twentieth Century and Beyond 121
 Memory Regimes 122
 Divergences and Convergences 127
 Martyrdom after the Holocaust 129

- 6** The Geometry of Memory: Horizontality and War Memorials in the Twentieth Century and After 143
 Gazing Downward: From Mantegna to Kollwitz 145
 Horizontality and the Unknown Soldiers of the Great War 150
 The Second World War and Civilian Deaths 153
 Maya Lin and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial 159
 Horizontality and European Pacifism 161

- 7** War Beyond Words: Shell Shock, Silence, and Memories of War 172
 Frameworks of Silence 172
 Shell Shock 174
 Case Studies 187
 Silence and Remembrance 201

Conclusion 203

ix / Contents

Bibliography 209

Index 225

*Color plates are to be found between pp. 74 and 75 and
pp. 170 and 171*

Illustrations

- I.1 Otto Dix, *Self-portrait*. Artepics / Alamy Stock Photo.
- I.2 Otto Dix, “Stormtroopers Advancing Under Gas” (1924). DACS 2016 / Bridgeman Images.
- I.3 Otto Dix, “Wounded Man” (1924). DACS 2016 / Bridgeman Images.
- I.4 Otto Dix, “Civilians Bombed in Bapaume” (1924). DACS 2016/Bridgeman Images.
- I.5 Pablo Picasso, *Guernica* (1937). Photographic Archives: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia.
- I.6 Anselm Kiefer, *Occupations* (1969). Published in *Interfunktionen* no. 12, Cologne, 1975. Collage, black and white photograph. Photo: Atelier Anselm Kiefer.
- I.7 Anselm Kiefer, *Bruch der Gefäße (Breaking of the Vessels)* (1990). Lead, iron, glass, copper wire, and charcoal. Photo : The Saint Louis Art Museum, St Louis, MO.
- I.8 A London library after the Blitz (1940). Black Star / Alamy.
- I.9 Roof structure of the glass yard in the Jewish Museum (Architect: Daniel Libeskind). Photo: Bladt / ullstein bild via Getty Images.
- I.10 Gerhard Richter, *Uncle Rudi* (1965). © Gerhard Richter 2017 (0012).
- I.11 Gerhard Richter, *Tote* (1963). © Gerhard Richter 2017 (0012).

xi / List of Illustrations

- 1.12 Paul Klee, *Angelus Novus* (1920). photo (c) The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, by Elie Posner.
- 1.13 Anselm Kiefer, *Sprache der Vögel* (Language of the Birds) (1989). Photo: White Cube Gallery, London.
- 2.1 Kodak vest pocket camera, advertisement for the Italian market (1915). Fototeca Storica Nazionale. / Getty Images.
- 2.2 Sgt. Albert Gal-Ladevèze, 268 RI, still image from a film of corpse disposal (1915). Collection: Bibliothèque de documentation internationale contemporaine (BDIC), Nanterre.
- 2.3 Sgt. Gal-Ladevèze, photo, “Mine is bigger than yours” (1915). Collection: BDIC, Nanterre.
- 2.4 Dr. Beurrier, “Ile de Vido,” photo album cover. Collection: BDIC, Nanterre.
- 2.5 Beurrier album, “Un serbe mourant” (a dying Serbian). Collection: BDIC, Nanterre.
- 2.6 Beurrier album, “La barque a Caron” Collection: BDIC, Nanterre.
- 2.7 Beurrier album, “La barque a Caron” (close-up). Collection: BDIC, Nanterre.
- 2.8 Beurrier album, “The St. Francis of Assisi coming to collect the dead.” Collection: BDIC, Nanterre
- 2.9 Bardach album cover. Courtesy of the Leo Baeck Institute, New York.
- 2.10 Bardach album, old man with a sack. Courtesy of the Leo Baeck Institute, New York.
- 2.11 Bardach album, prostitutes. Courtesy of the Leo Baeck Institute, New York.
- 2.12 Bardach album, field cinema. Courtesy of the Leo Baeck Institute, New York.
- 2.13 Bardach album, “Corpse robber.” Courtesy of the Leo Baeck Institute, New York.
- 2.14 Bardach album, airplane hauled by horses, Zwierow. Courtesy of the Leo Baeck Institute, New York.
- 2.15 Bardach album, morning prayers in a field near Lublin. Courtesy of the Leo Baeck Institute, New York.
- 2.16 “Armenian mother on the march.” Armenian National Institute, Wegner Collection.

xii / List of Illustrations

- 2.17 “Starved boy.” Armenian National Institute, Wegner Collection.
- 2.18 “Foraging for grain” Armenian National Institute, Wegner Collection.
- 3.1 Jean Renoir, *La Grande Illusion* (*Grand Illusion*) (1937), French actors Pierre Fresnay, Jean Gabin, Gaston Modot, Marcel Dalio and Julien Carette on set. (Photo by Sunset Boulevard/Corbis via Getty Images).
- 3.2 Kon Ichikawa, *The Burmese Harp* (1956), still of Mizushima (Shôji Yasui) with harp and parrots. (Photo by Brandon Films/Getty Images). Michael Ochs Archives / Stringer.
- 3.3 *The Longest Day* (1962), still of actors John Wayne, Stuart Whitman and Steve Forrest. (Photo by Stanley Bielecki Movie Collection/Getty Images).
- 3.4 David Lean, *The Bridge on the River Kwai* (1957), promotional portrait of actor Alec Guinness. (Photo by Columbia Tristar/Getty Images).
- 4.1 Epigraph on tombstone of J. M. Browne, Suvla Bay, Gallipoli. Photograph: the author.
- 5.1 Małgorzata Chodakowska, *Sea of Tears*, Dresden city cemetery (2010). Photograph: the author.
- 5.2 Umschlagplatz memorial, Warsaw. Photograph: the author.
- 5.3 Monument to the Murdered and Fallen in the East, Warsaw. Photograph: the author.
- 5.4 Railway carriage with crosses, Monument to the Murdered and Fallen in the East, Warsaw. Photograph: the author.
- 5.5 “In memory of the Armenian-American volunteer,” Arlington National Cemetery. Photograph: The author.
- 6.1 Karl and Käthe Kollwitz with workers installing her statues, German military cemetery, Roggevelde, Belgium (1932). Photo courtesy of the In Flanders Fields Museum, Ypres.
- 6.2 German military cemetery, Roggevelde, Belgium (1932). Copyright: De Klaproos Editions.

xiii / List of Illustrations

- 6.3 Stone crosses and WWI tombstones at German First World War One military cemetery in the Praatbosforest, Vladslo, Belgium, with Kollwitz statues in the rear. Arterra Picture Library / Alamy Stock Photo.
- 6.4 Slab bearing the name of Peter Kollwitz, German military cemetery, Vladslo, Belgium (2014). Photograph: the author.
- 6.5 Käthe Kollwitz, “The Survivors of the Dead. In Memoriam, January 15, 1919.” Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, Massachusetts, USA/Bridgeman Images.
- 6.6 Hans Holbein the Younger, *The Body of the Dead Christ in the Tomb* (1520–22). Kunstmuseum, Basel, Switzerland/Bridgeman Images.
- 6.7 Andrea Mantegna, *The Dead Christ and the Three Mourners* (c. 1480). Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan, Italy / Bridgeman Images.
- 6.8 Vittore Carpaccio, *The Dead Christ* ca. 1520. Artexplorer / Alamy Stock Photo.
- 6.9 Caravaggio, *The Death of the Virgin* (1601–6). Louvre, Paris, France / Bridgeman Images.
- 6.10 Edouard Manet, *The Dead Toreador* (1864). National Gallery of Art, Washington.
- 6.11 Käthe Kollwitz, “From many wounds, you bleed, O People!” between 1893 and 1897, etching (c) Käthe Kollwitz Museum Köln.
- 6.12 Käthe Kollwitz, “The Widow” (1922). © The Museum of Modern Art/Scala, Florence.
- 6.13 Wilhelm Lehmbruck, *The Fallen Man* (Der Gesturzte), (1915–16). Photo: AFP / Stringer.
- 6.14 George W. Lambert, *Recumbent Figure of a Soldier* (*Unknown Soldier*), St. Mary’s Cathedral, Sydney (1927). Photograph: the author.
- 6.15 The Weeping Window at the Tower of London on Remembrance Day 11 November 2014, to remember those who lost their lives during the First World War. Photo: Andrew J. Smith / Getty Images.
- 6.16 The Poppies on display at the Tower of London commemorating the anniversary of the First World War. Photo: Jamie Garbutt / Getty Images.

xiv / List of Illustrations

- 6.17 Monument to the Heroic Defenders of Leningrad (1970), Ploshchad Popedy, Victory square, Moskovsky district, St. Petersburg, Russia. Peter Forsberg / Europe / Alamy.
- 6.18 St. Petersburg, Further Afield, Piskarevskoye cemetery. Dorling Kindersley Ltd / Alamy Stock Photo.
- 6.19 “The Motherland calls!” monument in Volgograd, Russia. Andriy Kravchenko / Alamy.
- 6.20 Valle de los Caídos (Valley of the Fallen), Spain. YAY Media AS / Alamy Stock Photo.
- 6.21 Nathan Rapoport, Monument to the Heroes of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. Zoonar GmbH / Alamy.
- 6.22 Jochen Gerz and Esther Shalev-Gerz, *Monument Against Fascism*, Harburg, Hamburg (1986–93) – 1. DACS / Jochen Gerz, VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2016.
- 6.23 Jochen Gerz and Esther Shalev-Gerz, *Monument Against Fascism*, Harburg, Hamburg (1986–93) – 2. DACS / Jochen Gerz, VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2016.
- 6.24 Micha Ullman, *Versunkene Bibliothek* (Sunken Library), Bebelplatz (formerly known colloquially as Opernplatz), Berlin. Lothar Steiner / Alamy Stock Photo.
- 6.25 Dani Karavan, *Passages*, Portbou, Catalonia (1994).
- 6.26 Peter Eisenman, Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, Berlin, ground-level design (1995). Courtesy Eisenman Architects.
- 6.27 Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, Berlin, Germany. Julie G. Woodhouse / Alamy.
- 6.28 Boston, Mass. New England Holocaust Memorial (1999), Geoffrey Taunton / Alamy.
- 6.29 The Vietnam Veterans’ Memorial, with the names of those who died in this war carved in a black, granite wall, in Washington DC (2015). Monica Wells / Alamy Stock Photo.
- 6.30 Close-up of Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Washington, D.C., USA. Design Pics Inc / Alamy Stock Photo.
- 6.31 Historial de la grande guerre, Péronne, Somme, *fosse*, Room 2 (1992). Photograph: the author.
- 6.32 Historial de la grande guerre, Péronne, Somme, *fosse*, Room 3 (1992). Photograph: the author.

xv / List of Illustrations

- 6.33 France, Pas de Calais, Ablain Saint Nazaire, necropolis of Notre Dame de Lorette, “L’Anneau de la memoire” (Ring of Remembrance) overview of the Ring (2015). Hemis / Alamy Stock Photo.
- 6.34 France, Pas de Calais, Ablain Saint Nazaire, “L’Anneau de la memoire” (Ring of Remembrance). Hemis / Alamy.
- 6.35 “L’Anneau de la memoire” (Ring of Remembrance) at Ablain Saint-Nazaire French Military Cemetery, aerial view (2015). Robert Grahn / AFP/ Getty Images.
- 7.1 Lt. Col. W. G. Patterson, third from left, front row, group portrait, 1st Australian Division, Egypt (1914). Bruce Scates, *World War One: A history in 100 stories* (Melbourne: Penguin, 2015).
- 7.2 Perth War Memorial, plaque for Royce Beasjou, “Died of shell shock.” Bruce Scates, *World War One: A history in 100 stories* (Melbourne: Penguin, 2015).
- 7.3 Afyon Karahissar, Turkish prisoner-of-war settlement (1918). Chronicle / Alamy Stock Photo.
- 7.4 Sylvia Plath, Ted Hughes, William Hughes and Edith Hughes (1956).

Figures and Tables

Figures

4.1	Google n-gram of Glory and Glorious in British English books, 1900–1930.	<i>page</i> 115
4.2	Google n-gram of Gloire and Glorieux in French books, 1900–1930.	115
4.3	Google n-gram of Glory and Glorious in British English books, 1800–2000.	116
4.4	Google n-gram of Gloire and Glorieux in French books, 1800–2000.	116
4.5	Google n-gram of Duty, Honour, Glory in British English books, 1900–1950.	116
4.6	Google n-gram of Duty, Honour, Glory in British English books, 1800–2000.	117
4.7	Google n-gram of Devoir, Honneur, Gloire, Courage in French books, 1800–2000.	117
4.8	Google n-gram of Dienst, Ehre, Ruhm, Tapferkeit (Duty, Honour, Glory, Courage) in German books, 1800–2000.	117
5.1	Google n-gram of Martyr and Martyrdom in British English books, 1800–2000.	141
5.2	Google n-gram of Martyr and Martyre in French books, 1800–2000.	141
5.3	Google n-gram of Martyrer and Martyrtum in German books, 1800–2000.	142

xvii / List of Figures and Tables

- 5.4 Google n-gram of Martyr (מַעֲוָנָה קְדוּשׁ) and Martyrdom (הַקְדוּשָׁם מְוָה) in Hebrew books, 1900–2000. 142

Tables

- 7.1 Allied casualties at Gallipoli, 1915–16 183
 7.2 Estimates of the incidence of shell shock, under different assumptions, at Gallipoli, 1915–16, and throughout the 1914–18 war 183

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xix / Acknowledgments

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xx / Acknowledgments

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xxi / Acknowledgments

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xxii / Acknowledgments

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