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Cultural Battlegrounds:
Weimar Photographic Narratives Of War

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At the height of commemorative activities in Germany in the "anti-war year" of 1924, the tenth anniversary of war mobilization, the anarcho-pacifist propagandist Ernst Friedrich founded the International Antiwar Museum in Berlin and published his photographic narrative *Krieg dem Kriege!* [*War Against War*]. When images from the book were publicly displayed in his bookstore window, Berlin police stormed the premises and confiscated them at bayonet point. Other bookstore owners who displayed images from Friedrich's book were similarly harrassed or arrested, encouraged by patriotic veterans' organizations who called for banning the book. Friedrich's use of war photographs was part of a larger antiwar visual campaign that included paintings, graphic portfolios, art and photography exhibitions. The antimilitarist visual campaign coincided with public revelations of Germany's secret rearmament program and the organization of a new secret army, the Black *Reichswehr*. By 1925, however, with the defeat of working-class rebellions and the relative stabilization of the economy, the organized pacifist movement was politically contained by the ruling Social Democrats and effectively moribund; war imagery shifted dramatically away from antiwar statements in graphic art and painting toward heroic imagery in hugely popular patriotic photography albums.

Friedrich's visual strategy depended primarily on an identification of the viewer with the humanist image of the suffering soldier as a universal subject. Like other pacifists, he attempted to convey a picture of war that called forth visions of mutilation and meaningless death, shattered

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identity, and the devastating consequences of modern military technol-
ogy. Pacifists attempted to lay bare the horrors of combat and the
hypocrisy of militarist rhetoric and construct a national collective mem-
ory that would serve to galvanize the population into opposing and pre-
venting future wars. Patriotic albums countered by focusing not on
war's destructive bodily consequences, but on the drama of battle cam-
paigns and the German mastery of technological power. Patriots
increasingly linked technological advancement to nationalist ideology
through the impersonal imagery of weaponry and aerial abstraction,
constructing generalized heroic narratives that encouraged political
identification with the soldier's military role while avoiding any emo-
tional identification with the soldier.[1] Such patriotic albums were pored
over by a new generation of German youth who had not fought in the
war and dreamed of a chance to prove their manhood. My aim here is
to show how patriotic imagery succeeded in ideologically overcoming
the onus of Germany's devastating defeat in World War I. It achieved
visual and cultural dominance through its ability to trump the liberal
humanist discourse of universal brotherhood, based on the dehistori-
cized individual, with a strongly nationalist one, based on the subordi-
nation of the individual to the national community.[2] An examination of
the visual debate between pacifist and patriotic photographic imagery
helps reveal how the political weakness of pacifist representation made
possible its subordination to heroic imagery, and how patriotic construc-
tions were able to successfully remilitarize Germany, in visual terms, in
preparation for a new historical catastrophe.

The Problem of Photography
   Weimar publishers of both pacifist and patriotic photographic albums
of World War I put forth claims to representational authenticity that
were based on the postwar emergence of photography as the undis-
puted medium for "documentary" representation. The authority of the

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   1.   See George Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars*
(New York: Oxford UP, 1990).
   2.   Cf. Bernd Hüppauf, "Experiences of Modern Warfare and the Crisis of Repre-
sentation," *New German Critique* 59 (Spring/Summer 1993): 130-51. Hüppauf argues that
pacifist imagery helped shape a discourse that did as much to obscure the reality of war as
to expose it by creating an imaginary and traditional view of war based on the humanist
subjectivity of the soldier, an argument upon which I build. Hüppauf goes on to argue,
however, that heroic imagery was the flip side of this paradigm, equally dependent on an
obsolete humanist image, with which I disagree.

photographic image, premised on a technological foundation, seemed to assure objectivity by virtue of being "scientific" and allowed the promotion of photography as an unmediated mirror of reality, one that reflected a prior truth so clearly as to require no further explanation. In reality, the issue of authenticity was a highly contested one.

Tens of thousands of photographs of the war in public and private archives produced a massive presence of war images that helped shape collective public memory and determine the public discourse on the war. An archive of war images in itself seemed to confirm the existence of a linear progression from past to present and offered the possibility, as Allan Sekula has suggested, of an "unproblematic retrieval of the past" from the "superior position of the present."[3] The viewer seemed to be confronted not by a subjective historical representation of a geographically diffuse and nonlinear event, but by "history itself." The very availability of a massive number of photographs and their widespread use suggested that the war could be pictured as a sequential progression, and historical narration became "a matter of appealing to the silent authority of the archive, of unobtrusively linking incontestable documents in a seamless account."[4] The links between photographic images and the nature of the war were further complicated by the fact that the structure of war changed early on into a technologically mediated reality. Close combat and even a visible enemy became anachronistic with the advent of machine guns, artillery, and airplanes; divisions between the "front" and civilian populations were blurred by the end of the first month of war as German troops burned, pillaged, and executed civilian populations, which were later targets of aerial bombing.[5] Photographic narratives faced the problem of how to "remember" a war that had become so huge and decentralized as to defy comprehensive representation.

It has been amply demonstrated that guaranteed correspondences with a preexisting reality, at the heart of "documentary" photography, do not necessarily exist. That photographs are easily manipulated can be seen

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3. Allan Sekula, "Photography Between Labor and Capital," in *Mining Photographs and Other Pictures 1948-1968*, eds. B. Buchloh & R. Wilkie (Nova Scotia: P of the Nova Scotia College of Design, 1983) 198.
4. Sekula, "Photography Between Labor and Capital" 198.
5. See J. Horne and A. Kramer, "German 'Atrocities' and Franco-German Opinion, 1914 — The Evidence of German Soldiers' Diaries," *Journal of Modern History* 66.1 (1994): 1-33.

on a gross level from Stalinist and McCarthyist exploits to even *National Geographic* and *Time* magazine practices of montage, cropping, airbrushing and the "creative" altering of light.[6] It has been demonstrated that official photographs of World War I by the German government were subject to such overt practices of falsification, including photographs that were deliberately staged for the camera behind the front lines and later presented as authentic.[7] On a more subtle level, as many critics have argued, every photograph is a result of subjective choices or formal rules that render their relation to a prior reality problematic.[8] Thus all photographs are constructions. What makes the production of a subject through representation meaningful are the practices and institutions through which the photograph can exercise an effect. Though documentary claims to "present the facts" through "first-hand experience," this assertion is based on a claim for the privileged place of photographic technology. But it is only in the context of a photograph's use that we can see how meaning is established. In the case of Weimar picture albums of World War I, photographs were carefully selected and ordered to produce visual narratives that were ideologically interpreted by the captions provided for them. Thus it could happen that slightly different versions of the same photographs were published in politically hostile photographic albums with manifestly opposed meanings made apparent by the text.

Ernst Friedrich's Krieg dem Kriege!

A conscientious objector during the war, Ernst Friedrich was the first to draw on photographic archives of World War I in order to publish a picture album of images censored during the conflict by the German government. Disturbed by postwar signs of continued militarization, such as the social practice of photographing young schoolboys in military uniform, Friedrich first began collecting war photographs and

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6.   See, for example, Alain Jaubert, *Making People Disappear: An Amazing Chronicle of Photographic Deception* (Paris, 1986) and the *Time* 23 June 1994 cover photo of O. J. Simpson.

7.   See Bodo von Dewitz, *"So wird bei uns der Krieg geführt." Amateurfotografie im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Munich: Tudur Verlagsgesellschaft, 1989) esp. 266 ff.

8.   See John Tagg, *The Burden of Representation: Essays on Photographies and Histories* (Amherst: U of Massachusetts P, 1988); *Photography and Language*, ed. Lew Thomas (San Francisco: Camerawork P, 1979); Sekula, *Photography Against the Grain* (Nova Scotia, 1984); and *The Contest of Meaning*, ed. Richard Bolton (Cambridge: MIT P, 1989).

exhibiting them in his home on Petersburgerstraße in Berlin[9] in the early 1920s, in the context of a growing pacifist movement.[10] When antiwar commemorative demonstrations took place all over Germany during the 1924 anniversary year, Friedrich published *War Against War* in Berlin with text and captions in four languages.[11] He assembled not only pictures of the horrors of war — the decaying corpses of the dead and mutilated bodies of survivors — with ironic and partisan subtexts, but also reproduced documents and photographs in the opening pages showing how schools, manufacturers of children's toys, and the church, in alliance with the state and the military, were responsible for the continuous militarization of society. The book became an instant sensation. The leftist writer Kurt Tucholsky described its contents as "the most shocking and horrible photographs" imaginable, unlike anything he had ever seen and warned that "no written work can come near the power of these images . . . . Whoever sees these and does not shudder is not a human being, but a patriot."[12] The first 70,000 copies, at a price of five marks, were sold out within a few months. By

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9.   Friedrich had joined the Social Democratic Party in 1911 but refused to serve in the war and was placed temporarily in an observation station for the mentally ill. He organized an antimilitarist youth group in his native Breslau in 1916 and was jailed in Potsdam for an act of sabotage, and not freed until the November Revolution in 1918. He then went to Berlin and joined the Free Socialist Youth founded by Liebknecht and Luxemburg, taking an active part in revolutionary events. He departed what became the official youth group of the German Communist Party, having developed a perspective on radical social change based on transformation of the self, youthful autonomy, and organizational decentralization. Influenced by the anarchist ideas of Peter Kropotkin and Pierre Proudhon as well as the moral fervor of Leo Tolstoy, in 1919 Friedrich turned to anarchist politics and founded the youth group *Freie Jugend* as well as a bimonthly journal of the same name.

10.   Before 1914 organized pacifism in Germany was socially conservative and opposed to political radicalism. This situation changed at the end of World War I when sentiment for universal disarmament produced mass demonstrations and engaged the organizing efforts of socialists and the labor movement. When the Independent Socialists (USPD) left the movement in 1922, however, it began to decline and by 1924 was effectively taken over by the social-democratic International Federation of Trade Unions. For a discussion of the Weimar pacifist movement see Reinhold Lütgemeier-Davin, "Basismobilisierung gegen den Krieg: Die Nie-wieder-Krieg Bewegung in der Weimarer Republik," in *Pazifismus in der Weimarer Republik. Beiträge zur historischen Friedensforschung*, eds. Karl Holl and Wolfrom Wette (Paderborn: F. Schöningh, 1981).

11.   An American reprint, *War Against War!* was published by Real Comet Press (Seattle, 1987) with an introduction by Douglas Kellner. The book is also reprinted in *Weimarer Republik*, exh. cat., Kunstamt Kreuzberg und dem Institut für Theaterwissenschaft der Universität Köln (Berlin and Hamburg: Elefanten P, 1977) and Frankfurt/Main, 1992. The four languages are German, English, French, and Dutch, though the last language varied.

12.   Kurt Tucholsky, "Waffe gegen den Krieg," *Die Weltbühne* (23 Feb. 1926).

1930 *War Against War* had gone through ten editions and was translated into more than 40 languages.

Friedrich's rhetorical strategy in *War Against War* was to juxtapose optimistic, patriotic, and militarist images captioned by official rhetoric and flowery phrases with shocking photographs showing the horror and atrocities of war captioned by his own ironic commentary; official propaganda images and rhetoric were thus paired with illustrations of what this discourse produced. Toward the end of the book Friedrich switched his narrative strategy to an accretion of *Schreckensbilder*, horror-photos that relentlessly mounted an emotional appeal for the renunciation of war based on visceral repulsion to universal human physical suffering. Friedrich presented his collection as "a picture of War, objectively true and faithful to nature" in a claim to unmediated transparency that may be seen as a rhetorical strategy in the battle over authenticity in photography. This claim is belied, however, by Friedrich's use of text to interpret the photographs. Not relying on the image to "speak for itself," his captions challenge militarist ideology on every page. The photographs, in other words, while often powerful images in themselves, to a significant degree derive their emotional charge and meaning from Friedrich's commentary.

Friedrich appealed to humanist love and desire for peace, while calling for struggle against war. Sharing Tolstoy's belief that a new "pure Christian" society would be based on brotherhood, community, and nonviolence, Friedrich also emphasized individual draft resistance in the introduction to his book. His pacifist anarchism was directed against state violence rather than state power or the capitalist system per se. Friedrich tried to position himself somewhere between bourgeois conscientious objectors and proletarian socialists with the vague, idealist slogan, "Fight capitalism within yourselves!" He called on proletarians to prevent war not only by refusing to serve but by disrupting the militarization of society through the institution of the family. The social practices of dressing up in soldiers' uniforms and playing with war toys were condemned on the basis of their symbolic alliance with violence rather than any concrete ideological links with imperialism, chauvinism, or xenophobia.

Of more than 180 photographs in *War Against War*, over two-thirds are horror-photos, images that were officially censored during the war. While there are no breaks in the flow of photographs from beginning to end, I distinguish between four main photographic sequences which cover: 1) enthusiastic voluntarism, war experience, and violent death; 2)

brief images of the female soldier and the prostitute; 3) destruction of the landscape and the war-wounded, leading to a long series of mutilated faces; 4) soldiers' graves.

The first and longest sequence comprises over half the photographs in the book. The stage is set with the first image of eager volunteers marching in the streets, in which the caption asks, "From the August days of 1914 — Enthusiastic . . . for what. . . ." and is answered by the photograph on the facing page showing a heap of corpses by the side of a trench, captioned, ". . . for the 'field of honor'." Pictures of the first German reserves starting for the front and happy soldiers posing for the camera are followed by the Kaiser inspecting the battlefield, the distribution of war medals in the field, and the German Crown Prince with his greyhounds behind the lines. These photos are juxtaposed with photos of shattered, mutilated corpses and bodies burned to remnants by flame throwers, incinerated in their armored cars or in their downed and burned out airplanes. Echoing the language of war reports later utilized by Erich Maria Remarque, Friedrich ironically captions several photographs of dead soldiers, "No particular occurrences at the front," and "At the front all is quiet." Decapitated bodies, skulls, and figures stiffening with rigor mortis are heaped in trenches, in mass graves, or left to rot in the field. They represent not only Germans but many other nationalities. Images of the dead are periodically punctuated by patriotic pictures of a soldier posing with his gun for a formal studio photograph or officers drinking in a lavish setting, now bitterly ironic and meant to fuel the resentment of regular soldiers against officers. These are followed by pictures of mine explosions, emaciated soldiers who have died of starvation, dehumanized soldiers in gas masks, rows of the wounded, dead horses and human corpses tangled in barbed wire. Thus the pictures, coordinated with the text, are organized as a "rhetoric versus reality" dialectic.

This section concludes with a sequence of a dozen hangings of conscientious objectors — a priest and unidentified women prisoners, executed by Germans or their allies — and photos of Armenian children starved to death. These photographs allude to the highly controversial issue of German "atrocities" during the war, for which Germany and the Allies constructed different definitions. The debate began when 93 German academics signed a declaration on 4 October 1914 denying German responsibility for the war and rejecting Allied charges of atrocities in Belgium. The declaration ended with a statement that identified German

culture and scholarship with German militarism.[13] Joseph Bédier, an eminent philologist and professor at the Collège de France, wrote two widely disseminated pamphlets, based on German soldiers' diaries, which constituted the main Allied intervention into this issue.[14] Half the incidents cited by Bédier concerned summary executions of civilians; the rest primarily involved pillaging, incendiarism, the use of civilians as human shields, the killing of wounded Allied soldiers and prisoners of war, and one case of rape. Bédier's definition of atrocity was based on the standard of military conduct established by the Hague Convention of 1907 (to which Germany was a signatory), which found pillaging, killing wounded or surrendered enemy soldiers, and above all, executing civilians in reprisal for acts of resistance, abhorrent and contrary to international law. The German philologists, on the other hand, held that civilian anarchy and insurgence constituted an outrage against "loyal soldiers" and justified the severest repression, adopting the same position as the 93 German professors who claimed the necessity of "bitter self-defense" against civilian resistance.[15] Friedrich's photographs and captions represent an indictment of German and Allied atrocities, extending the debate over the killing of enemy prisoners and presumed civilian "resisters" to include priests, conscientious objectors and children.

Captions throughout this first sequence describe the cruel indignities of death, the illusions of patriotic rhetoric, and the suffering of those who died, returning over and over to the hollowness of the concepts of "heroism" on the "field of honor." The combined photographs and text create the effect that the dead were everywhere and that death was painful and grotesque. As Robert Whalen has pointed out, for those who clung to the heroic metaphor on the homefront, death might be painful but was never grotesque. Dead heroes were never "flung into pits" but solemnly buried among comrades; heroes were not torn apart screaming

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13.   "An die Kulturwelt! Ein Aufruf." The declaration was published in all the main daily newspapers in Germany and was widely commented on in the Allied countries. It was signed by such respected scholars and cultural figures as Gerhart Hauptmann, Engelbert Humperdinck, Friedrich Naumann, Max Planck, and Max Reinhardt. See Horne & Kramer 5.

14.   The pamphlets were part of a series of brochures published in 1915 by the *Comité d'Etudes et Documents sur la Guerre* composed of eminent French academics from the Sorbonne, the Collège de France, and the Académie Francaise. It was presided over by the historian Ernest Lavisse and its secretary was Emile Durkheim. Horne & Kramer 6.

15.   Horne & Kramer 9-10.

but "died neatly and with dignity."[16] Moreover, in the extensive post-war right-wing literature, Germany was never defeated in the field; sol-diers won battle after battle until in the end the war was lost.[17]

A New Category of Documentation: Medical Photography

The second series of photographs, representing militarized females and prostitutes, reinscribes dominant notions of German male purity, traditional gender roles, and the corruption of the prostitute.[18] The third series begins with torpedoed ships and bombed castles, houses, and churches. Though Friedrich laments the destruction of homes and churches in some of the photographs, in others he harshly attacks insti-tutionalized religion. He captions, for example, a photograph of a ruined church with priests standing about, "'You must witness fear and hor-ror.' (Utterance of Pastor Schettler.) By the still smoking debris of a Belgian church, the priestly vultures assemble again and discuss ways and means of again cheating and deceiving the people in the newly erected church."[19] The accumulating horror of death, destruction, and decomposition culminates, however, in the bandaged head and deformed face of a soldier in a hospital gown. Captioned "The Visage of War," this image is followed by a series of twenty-three tight close-ups that fill the frame with severely mutilated soldiers' physiognomies, known in the medical world as "men without faces."[20] It is a forced confrontation with the agonizing loss of facial and psychic identity, the horror that disabled veterans must have felt when they discovered that they had become grotesque. Captions to these photographs are largely matter-of-fact, often including the soldiers' rank, date of injury, descrip-tion of injury, and status of treatment, including how many operations

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16.   Robert Weldon Whalen, *Bitter Wounds: German Victims of the Great War, 1914-1939* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1984) 43.

17.   See Klaus Theweleit, *Male Fantasies. Male Bodies: Psychoanalyzing the White Terror*, vol. 2, trans. by Erica Carter and Chris Turner (Minneapolis: U of Minne-sota P, 1989) 70.

18.   For a discussion of the construction of masculinity and femininity in these pho-tographs and in antiwar images by Otto Dix and Käthe Kollwitz, see my "'Heroes' and 'Whores': The Politics of Gender in Weimar Antiwar Imagery," *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. LXXIX, No. 3 (September 1997): 366-84.

19.   Friedrich, *War Against War* (1987) 201.

20.   See Bernd Ulrich, "'. . . als wenn nichts geschehen wäre.' Anmerkungen zur Behandlung der Kriegsopfer während des Ersten Weltkriegs," in *Keiner fühlt sich hier mehr als Mensch . . . Erlebnis und Wirkung des Ersten Weltkriegs*, eds. Gerhard Hirschfeld et. al. (Essen: Klartext, 1993).

they had already undergone. Friedrich alternates such information with occasional remarks meant to evoke the pathos of their situation:

> Some war cripples refused information. Other wounded, particularly those gruesomely mutilated, did not allow themselves to be photographed, as they feared their relatives who had not seen them again, would either collapse at the sight of their misery, or would turn away forever from them in horror and disgust.[21]

Friedrich reprises his method of juxtaposed official statements and ironic commentary with the last two images in this section. The next-to-last photograph reveals a raw-looking wound of the mouth and cheek being pulled open by two surgical devices, captioned, "War agrees with me like a stay at a health resort," referring to the notorious comment by Hindenburg. The final image depicts a man in profile whose face is largely missing, bitterly captioned, "The 'health resort' of the proletarian. Almost the whole face blown away" (figures 1 and 2).

The pictures of individual soldiers' faces are carefully set up clinical photographs. In his afterword, Friedrich acknowledges several sources for his photographs including anonymous sources from which he no doubt acquired the closeups of "men without faces" taken in veterans' hospitals. The fact that the photographs came supplied with detailed information, not only about the rank and identity of their subjects, but the date and descriptions of injury and the status of medical treatment, suggests that these were official hospital photographs, as do the surgical implements held by anonymous hands that are used to pull open the victims' mouths in order to make their injuries more visible to the camera lens.[22] The method of representation itself also suggests a clinical setting. The process of photographing disfigured faces — the tight closeups, neutral backgrounds, subjection to an unreturnable gaze, intense scrutiny of face and features — produces an intimate observation in

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21. Ulrich 217.
22. Further verifying the institutional context for these photographs, Friedrich in his second volume of *War Against War*, published two years later, included a group photograph consisting of seven veterans with disfigured faces, four of whom are identifiable from individual portraits in Friedrich's first volume. The caption identifies them as invalids mutilated by war who will stay in military hospitals for their entire lives. More institutional photographs show standing nude men displaying their leg and buttock injuries for the camera, with factual captions such as, "Upper thigh torn by grenade splinter (40% injured by war, receives 14,60 Mk. monthly)." See Friedrich, *Krieg dem Kriege*, vol. 2 (Berlin, 1926) 198, 222.

Figure 1. "'War agrees with me like a stay at a health resort.' (Hindenburg)," photograph, in Ernst Friedrich, *Krieg dem Kriege* (1924).
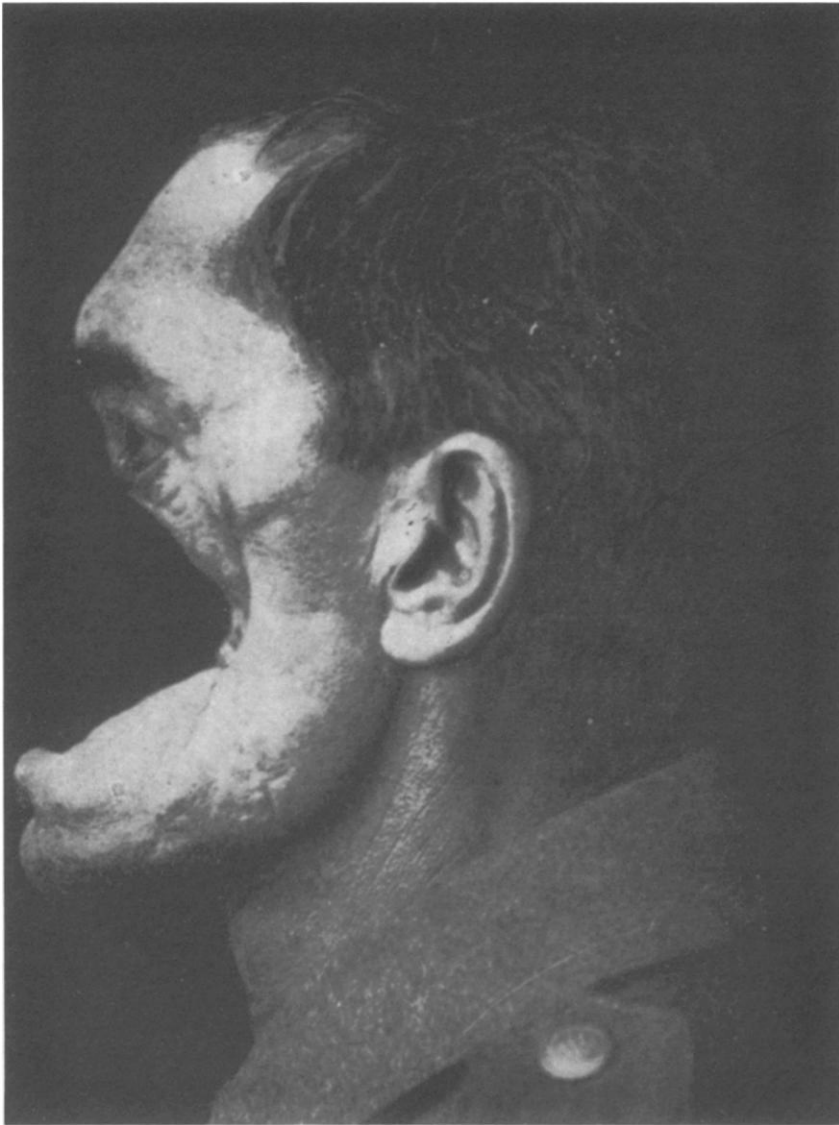
Figure 2. "The 'health resort' of the proletarian. Almost the whole face blown away," photograph, in Ernst Friedrich, *Krieg dem Kriege* (1924).

which a passive subject is made to submit to a dominant gaze. This could only be the gaze of the medical institution in which the power of the state resided (since German doctors were generally not private entrepreneurs but civil servants affiliated with public institutions or, in the case of military doctors and university professors, employees of the state). Doctors dominated the lives of war victims and thousands of disabled soldiers never left the medical world. Many hospitals specialized in particular areas such as blindness, psychiatry, or facial wounds. The medical archive created through the massive documentation of facial wounds facilitated an ever more intimate observation and greater control in which the supervising institution appeared to be benevolent and disinterested while creating relations of dependence and consent. Identities were reduced to their injuries and status as patients; their social value as members of society was reduced to their value to the medical institution and the advancement of medical science.[23] The rhetoric of medical photography, guided by a set of rules based on precision, close examination, and an avoidance of emotional appeal, created a new category of documentary representation, a response to the consequences of technological warfare that required new methods of documentation, which positioned wounded veterans as passive and pathetic objects subject to the gaze of the paternal state.[24]

The new practice of medical photography created its own protocols that subordinated the human subject to the dominance of the medical institution. Friedrich, by publishing apparently pirated official institutional photographs, appropriated their medical "truth" in order to create a different kind of truth. He shifted their political role, detaching them from the power of the medical institution in which they were meant to operate, and projected the politics of pacifism. This altered discourse was not based on the assumption of neutral "scientific objectivity" that facilitated the dominance of the medical institution, but was animated by a visceral and moral reaction, a felt sense of horror and

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23.   According to a 1917 order from the War Ministry in Berlin, all types of war wounded were to be discouraged from entering cities where they might make public nuisances of themselves and become politicized. See Marquard, Kriegsministerium, Kriegsamt, Berlin, 19.7.1917, "Kriegsbeschädigte als Hausierer und Bettler," UA Tübingen, 308/42, cited in Paul Lerner, "Irrational Minds/Rationalized Bodies: Psychiatry and Industry in World War I," Paper presented at the annual meeting of the German Studies Association, Chicago, 24 Sept. 1995, 5, 15 n. 41.
24.   See Tagg, *Burden of Representation*, especially the Introduction.

victimization that implicated the state and the military for the institu-
tion of war and its consequences on the body.[25] The mutilated faces,
which in some cases had already undergone thirty and forty operations
were evidence, moreover, of the medical world's inability to ade-
quately remedy the violent destruction of the body; hence the need to
hide them away in often secret medical institutions, so as not to disturb
the general public with the knowledge of mass and permanent facial
mutilation. In this sense, photographic representation became a site of
contested meaning in which the reality to which these photographs pre-
sumably referred was transformed by the way in which they entered
discursive practice. By entering them into the public domain, Friedrich
hoped to mount an emotional appeal for the renunciation of war based
on visceral repulsion to universal human physical suffering.[26]

   Images of mutilated soldiers had been published during the war in a
positivist context as well, not only in medical journals, but in advertise-
ment brochures of the orthopedic and medico-mechanical industry, and
in information brochures of "War Cripples" Relief organizations; they
also were used in lectures to invalid homes. One such 1916 publication

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   25.   At least three of the photographs published by Friedrich had also appeared in the
last issue of the USPD illustrated weekly *Freie Welt* in 1920, in which it was noted, "We
saw these men after paying a visit, at the invitation of the Berlin-Brandenburger Military
Hospital Commission, to the Military Hospital in Thüringer Allee (Berlin-West End) and
the Luther Lyceum at Tempelhof Ufer." Given the secrecy of these postwar military hos-
pitals, the circumstances of this invitation would be interesting to know. It was further
noted that 48,000 men were still in hospitals, with 2,500 in Berlin. *Freie Welt*, which
existed from May 1919 to December 1920, was limited in its distribution, however; it was
not until Friedrich published *War Against War* that these photographs achieved wide-
spread public exposure in a provocative pacifist context.
   26.   That Friedrich acquired these photographs from the medical world is made more
intriguing by the evident subversion of official protocols by one of the medical establish-
ment's most respected members; according to Ernst Friedrich's grandson, Tommy Spree,
in a conversation with the author in Berlin, 15 Aug. 1993, they were given to Friedrich by
the distinguished Dr. Ferdinand Sauerbruch, a world-famous thoracic surgeon who
invented the "iron lung" pressure chamber. During the war Sauerbruch was appointed
consulting surgeon to the Fifteenth Army Corps and served near Ypres; in the postwar
period he continued his treatment of the war-wounded, including General Ludendorff.
Sauerbruch was head of surgery in the Munich University hospital in 1918 and was
appointed Surgeon-General to the Bavarian Army. The exact source of his photographs,
however, is not known. In his autobiography, Sauerbruch makes no allusions to Friedrich
or photographs of mutilated soldiers, only mentioning pacifism once in the context of his
productive professional relationship with a Professor Stodola of Zurich Technical College
in 1915-1916, with whom he invented artificial hands for disabled soldiers, and whom he
describes as "a convinced pacifist." See Ferdinand Sauerbruch, *Master Surgeon*, trans. by
Fernand G. Renier and Anne Cliff (New York: Crowell, 1953) 121.

included 85 photographs, which were often republished by newspapers and magazines such as *Leipziger Illustrierte Zeitung* and *Garten-laube*.[27] The weekly magazine *Die Umschau* published a single periodical in 1916 on new developments in techniques, science, and medicine with photographs of eight jawbones and facial injuries.[28] The purpose of these publications and the use of photographs in lectures was twofold: to make even the mutilations suffered by so many soldiers presentable to the public by transforming them into triumphs of prosthesis technology, and to help reintegrate disabled veterans into the production process so as to prevent both the shrinking of German industrial capacity and the hindering of further recruitment to the front.[29] Mutilated soldiers who failed to return to the workforce out of shame were dismissed as having "weak nerves," while those who did so were praised for showing "iron will" and the "better nerves" of a German. Will, in the medical context, meant "imposing on oneself the regimen the doctor ordered," whether returning to the battlefront during the war or to the workforce afterwards. "In effect, it was a demand that the patient surrender his will — akin to the political ideology in which the highest expression of life was surrendering it for the good of the nation."[30] Ironically, the discourse of feminization implied by "weak nerves," in which the "manliness" of the soldier/veteran was in question, could only be countered by self-subordination and obedience.

Friedrich, too, made use of photographs originally published to advertise medico-mechanical engineering, but in order to construct an ironic counternarrative. He juxtaposed, for example, the German Crown Prince playing tennis, captioned, "After the war: The German Crown Prince as the hardest worker . . ." with an amputee wearing a prosthetic device in place of his arm, captioned, ". . . and the war-wounded proletarian at his daily sport" (figures 3 and 4). The amputee is at work in a factory or shop and uses his artificial arm to hold a spike steady while attempting to hammer it with his good arm. Friedrich's photograph is typical of those

27.   This publication was *Kriegskrüppelfürsorge. Ein Aufklärungswort zum Troste und zur Mahnung*, ed. K. Biesalski (Leipzig/Hamburg: L. Voss, 1915). It appeared in 1916 in an edition of 140,000. Other publications include Dipl. Ing. Jacobi, "Die Bedeutung des Lichtbildes für unsere Kriegsbeschädigtenfürsorge," *Aus der Arbeit — Für die Arbeit* (1917/18), and the 1917 film by Monopol-Film-Vertriebs-Gesellschaft, "Wie unsere Kriegsinvaliden wieder arbeiten lernen." In Ulrich 128, n. 17.

28.   Ulrich 121.

29.   Ulrich 121.

30.   Whalen 65.

Figure 3. "After the war: the German Crown Prince as the hardest worker . . . ," photograph, in Ernst Friedrich, *Krieg dem Kriege* (1924).

Figure 4. ". . . and the war-wounded proletarian at his daily 'sport'," photograph, in Ernst Friedrich, *Krieg dem Kriege* (1924).

used to advertise the proud successes of prosthetic engineering during the war, whose principle of design was efficiency, not aesthetics.[31] Friedrich, however, employs the photographic pairing and text to subvert admiration for the triumphs of prosthesis technology by creating a biting observation on aristocratic privilege and working-class victimization; he draws on the resentment soldiers bore toward those who exempted themselves from the inferno of war which they helped to create and impose on others.

Medical photographs of the mutilated thus traversed a series of contexts. They were first used during the war itself to represent German technological prowess in successfully reintegrating the wounded veteran into the workforce. Parallel to the modern industrial might of the German war machine, prosthetic engineering could keep the economy going at home. Secondly, medical photographs were used to visually record and catalog types of injury and surgical results in medical archives. A third use was the transformation of these photographs from both an industrial advertisement and object of techno-medical investigation to images meant to shock the public out of its moral complacency into antimilitarist opposition. This was to be achieved through the realization that after years of invisibility, the mutilated, especially the "men without faces," had not been simply fixed up and reintegrated into society but were still hidden away, ashamed and grotesque, in secret hospitals. Many soldiers reported as dead or missing were in reality living in these hospitals.[32]

Friedrich's book concludes with photographs of vast cemeteries that point to the immense scale of destruction. The encompassing structure of the photo album endows each image with the power to make a meaningful statement; at the same time, the single images can be viewed as part of a logical order or historical totality that leads ineluctably from war enthusiasm to grotesque physical destruction and the casual disposal of

31.   In February 1916, the *Verband Deutscher Ingenieure* sponsored an artificial arm contest; a total of 82 arms were submitted. The highest prize went to the "Jagendberg arm," which consisted of "two metal rods joined by a ball-and-socket joint which can be turned in any direction, a grip of the well hand sufficing to fix or loosen it. It is fastened to the stump by a tight-fitting leather cuff. With the arm is furnished a set of 20 attachments suitable for all the ordinary operations of life [. . . .]" Douglas McMurtrie, *The Evolution of National Systems of Vocational Reeducation for Disabled Soldiers and Sailors* (Washington: Film Board of Vocational Education, 1918), quoted in Whalen 61. Friedrich's photograph appears to be an illustration of this type of arm.

32.   See Ulrich 125-126.

corpses, to devastation of the environment, moral corruption and the shat-
tered lives of wounded survivors whose numbers are overwhelmed by the
graves of the millions lost. Presenting a near excruciating sequence of
never-before published horror-photos to the German public in the con-
text of a provocative, politically confrontational text produced a fearful
reaction among Prussian authorities, who subjected these images to
harassment and censorship when displayed in leftist and working class
bookstores. In addition to the shocking photographs of disfigured faces,
the numerous closeups of burned, decayed and mutilated corpses con-
structed a terrifying vision of the "reality" of war. The still contentious
accusations of German and Allied atrocities were visually supported by
images of civilian executions, hangings, and mass starvation, while the
rhetoric of heroic death for the Fatherland was subverted by photographs
of mass graves and indications of dismemberment, belying the myth of a
dignified burial for every dead soldier.

Friedrich's second volume of *War Against War*, published in 1926, was,
if anything, even more gruesome in some of its images than the first,
though probably not as potent in its overall impact, since it largely
repeated or extended themes already established in the first book. More-
over, a distinct note of bitterness and despair entered Friedrich's impas-
sioned protest over public tolerance for the continued militarization of
society. A new element, however, was an explicit reference to the eco-
nomic motives of war in the introduction to the second volume:

> Soldiers, do not forget the recent mass-murders: look at these pictures
> and remember how you inflated your bodies in the dirt and clay of the
> trenches. . . . But you others also: you war-enthusiasts! All you who
> have not died that "hero's" death (which you recommend to others) on
> the field of infamy. You all, look at these pictures in the stillness of
> your chambers — look at them with understanding!! Perhaps then,
> some of you will come to yourselves and acknowledge: "Yes, war is a
> crime against humanity." But that will be only a few of you, for the
> majority of warmongers war is a profitable piece of business. War is
> always business! A trade in human flesh. The capitalists of all lands
> fill their shot-proof money-safes with the proceeds of this war-busi-
> ness. The well-paid slaughter masters send the cattle — the proletari-
> ans — to "heroes'" deaths. And even on these a profit is made![33]

Friedrich here makes a desperate entreaty to the humanity of the
militarists above political considerations: "But you others also: you

33.   Friedrich, *Krieg dem Kriege*, vol. 2 16.

war-enthusiasts! . . . You all, look at these pictures in the stillness of your chambers — look at them with understanding!! Perhaps then, some of you will come to yourselves and acknowledge: 'Yes, war is a crime against humanity.'" In the next breath, however, Friedrich concedes the limited value of this humanist appeal: "But that will be only a few of you, for the majority of warmongers war is a profitable piece of business." His reductionist analysis of their motives for war as simple economic ones, an analysis which avoids politics, was later used as an implicit target for attack by nationalists who published their own photographic albums.

Reception of War Against War!

Friedrich's display of gruesome photographs in the storefront window of his newly founded Antiwar Museum in Berlin met with an order from the Berlin police for their immediate removal; the order further prohibited all other workers' bookshops in Berlin from publicly exhibiting any pictures from his book. When Friedrich refused to carry out police orders, two officials of the Prussian police and an official of the Secret Police entered his bookshop and removed them with their bayonets. Police confiscated most of the reproduced photographs and issued a receipt, dated 30 September 1924, for "77 leaflets showing terrible pictures of wounds and mutilations caused by the war."[34]

In February 1925 the pacifist/Social Democratic newspaper *Königsberger Volkszeitung* exhibited several of these photographs in its bookstore window together with a placard which read "Hindenburgs Badekur 1914-1918," which was placed over a copy display of *War Against War*. Two local nationalist associations protested to the public prosecutor who had the offending placard confiscated by police and the bookstore owner arrested on a charge of disturbing the public peace. The *Königsberger Volkszeitung* subsequently claimed to have received hundreds of letters from workers who found the book stirring, many of whom volunteered to assist in its distribution.[35]

At least one nationalist organization went further in its protests against Friedrich's book and attempted to have it banned altogether. In the same month that the Nazi Party was refounded after Hitler's early release from

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34.   *Schwarze Fahne* 2 (1925). The handwritten receipt is also reproduced in Friedrich, *War Against War* (1987) 250.

35.   The bookstore owner was sentenced to six weeks in jail and a fine of 150 marks. *Königsberger Volkszeitung* 52 and 96, quoted in *Freie Jugend* 7.3 (Feb. 1925) and *Freie Jugend* 7.5 (Mar. 1925).

prison, the presidium of the *Bayerischen Kriegerbundes* [Bavarian Soldiers' League], despairing of any help from the "swamp" of Berlin, appealed to the Munich public prosecutor's office in February 1925. It condemned *War Against War* as "incredible, insidious calumny against the old army" and called for "the seizure and destruction of these books."[36] Other nationalists, including a certain Traub in an editorial for the *München-Augsburger Abendzeitung*, not only called for banning the book but also for prosecuting Ernst Friedrich and his newspaper *Freie Jugend*, and expelling Friedrich from the country.[37] The development of nationalist opposition to the antimilitarist use of war imagery was taken to its logical conclusion by the demand for the complete suppression of Friedrich's photographs and the redefinition of Friedrich as a non-citizen, paving the way for the legitimized persecution of antimilitarist thought and the expulsion of its practitioners under National Socialism. Friedrich appeared to the nationalists as one of the "internal traitors" who had helped cause the defeat of the German army in the field by stabbing it in the back at home, a category of identity that nationalists held tantamount to "un-German."

The historical memory of the war that Friedrich constructed was challenged not for its lack of documentary authenticity but because it ridiculed the distinctly anti-humanist nationalist history of the war which depended upon a metaphorical alignment of the soldier with the nation through the rhetoric of heroism and honor. Moreover, Friedrich's book came at a time when nationalists refused to acknowledge a resolution to the war and the Black *Reichswehr*,[38] formed in 1923 under the direction of the Chief of Staff General von Seekt and

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36.   *Schweinfurter Tageblatt* 47 (20 Feb. 1925), quoted in *Freie Jugend* 7.3 (Mar. 1925).

37.   *Freie Jugend* 7.5 (Mar. 1925).

38.   The Black *Reichswehr* constituted a secret reserve army of 50,000 to 80,000 men. A putsch of the Black *Reichswehr* was defeated at the last moment by the regular army on 1 October 1923 and the organization was subsequently suppressed, only to be replaced by the heavily armed *Schutzpolizei*, a police force of almost 70,000 men. The radical right subjected a number of pacifists to outright terror, murdering Alexander Futran and Hans Paasche, and beating many others, including Otto Lehmann-Russbüldt, who in 1925 coauthored *Weissbuch über die Schwarze Reichswehr* [*Whitebook on the Black Reichswehr*]. The radical democratic *Weltbühne* published a series of articles on the Black *Reichswehr* in the same year; Lehmann-Russbüldt was not only a regular contributor to the *Weltbühne* but a founder of the pacifist Federation for a New Fatherland which in 1922 became the German League for Human Rights. See Istvan Deak, *Weimar Germany's Left-Wing Intellectuals: A Political History of the 'Weltbühne' and Its Circle* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1968) 119-20.

with the consent of President Ebert, embarked on a secret rearmament program in violation of the Versailles Treaty. It was the pacifist press which was primarily responsible for exposing the rearmament program and the secret organization of the Black *Reichswehr*, revealing its intimate connections to the regular *Reichswehr*.

When the draconian demands of the political right against Friedrich and his book were not met by the government, largely because of popular support for Friedrich,[39] the nationalists devised another strategy to counter the pacifist visual discourse using Friedrich's own method of narrative war imagery and evocative text in photographic albums.

Patriotic Photograph Albums: The Response to Friedrich

There were a number of patriotic photographic albums published in the later 1920s in response to pacifist politics and representations. Done in a chronological, documentary style, they implicitly countered in text and photographs Friedrich's outspoken antimilitarism by focusing not on the consequences of war, but on the drama of battle campaigns, the German mastery of technological power and its destructive impact on the landscape, and by presenting views of the soldier that encouraged political identification with his military role while avoiding emotional identification. The patriotic war albums elaborated truth claims that were often based on assertions that the photographs used were taken by soldiers themselves in the field. Bodo von Dewitz has demonstrated that such claims were highly misleading. The albums were not only illustrated with many official photographs taken from the air, but overt photographic manipulations such as cropping, staging behind the lines, and airbrushing were employed to promote the idea that the German army was undefeated in the field. Such soldiers' photographs as were used

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39.   The left and liberal press raised a cry of protest that Friedrich credits with preventing the ban of his book. Supporting *War Against War*, for example, were *Vorwärts* (social democratic): "The effect of this book is stronger than that of a hundred pacifist editorials and talks"; *Die Rote Fahne* (communist): "The first large photographic book of the war. An inextinguishable document. Authentic, unimpeachable photographic recording of the carnage of the World War and its consequences. The true face of war."; *Berliner Tageblatt* (liberal democratic): "A staggering book. With an insistence which cannot be ignored, the step is taken from the horror of fighting toward the goal of a real people's peace."; *Das andere Deutschland* (pacifist): "Either thoughts of war die with this book, or humanity deserves to die with thoughts of war. Whoever sees this and similar books and remains enthusiastic about war deserves to be put in a madhouse." Quoted in *Europäische Ideen*, Special issue on Ernst Friedrich, ed. Andreas W. Mytze (Berlin, 1977) 24.

were usually manipulated to the point that they no longer resembled the originals or served the purposes for which they were originally taken — as souvenirs and to allow soldiers to find their own identity and place in the war. Claims of objectivity were often further underscored by short, factual captions that were meant to echo the direct, unmediated nature of the experience they recorded and to imply that, unlike Friedrich's ironic captions, there was no need for interpretation here because these pictures "spoke for themselves."[40] Nonetheless, as in Friedrich's book, these photographs relied on the text for their meaning and constructed a narrative of sacrifice of the self to the collective ideal of the nation and the high moral purpose of protecting the Fatherland.

The most direct and immediate response to Friedrich's book, one that also serves as a representative example, was Hermann Rex's *Der Weltkrieg in seiner rauhen Wirklichkeit 1914-1918* [*The World War in its Harsh Reality 1914-1918*], published in 1926.[41] Visually organized by military campaigns with the majority of space devoted to the Western Front, the book opens with inspiring speeches and cheering crowds in Berlin, followed by enthusiastic troops marching off to war. The idealism of these opening images is carried through to the end of the book. Soldiers standing around enormous mounted guns are followed by destroyed villages in France, showing the power and impact of those guns; aestheticized aerial shots of cratered and patterned ground and huge shell holes created by German grenades provide a different vantage point for admiring German firepower (figures 5 and 6). These images are followed by picturesque church ruins and destroyed landscapes, enemy corpses and, eventually, some German dead. The viewer is not left to dwell on such images, however; they are immediately followed by photographs of wounded French and German prisoners. This pattern is repeated many times to evoke the sense of a series of combat campaigns. Rex's book includes 600 pictures, an enormous inventory he attributes to his service as the head of the Film and Photo Office [*Bild- und Filmamt* or BUFA] for the German High Command from 1914 to 1918. BUFA's purpose was to serve the national interest, i.e., promote

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40.   Dewitz 266-96.
41.   Herman Rex, *Der Weltkrieg in seiner rauhen Wirklichkeit 1914-1918; Kriegs-bilderwerk mit 600 Bildern aus allen Fronten nach authentischen, wahrheitsgetreuen, photographischen Originalaufnahmen durch den Kriegsphotographen Hermann Rex* (Oberammergau, n.d. [1926]). The full title itself indicates the contested nature of authenticity and the importance of claiming it.
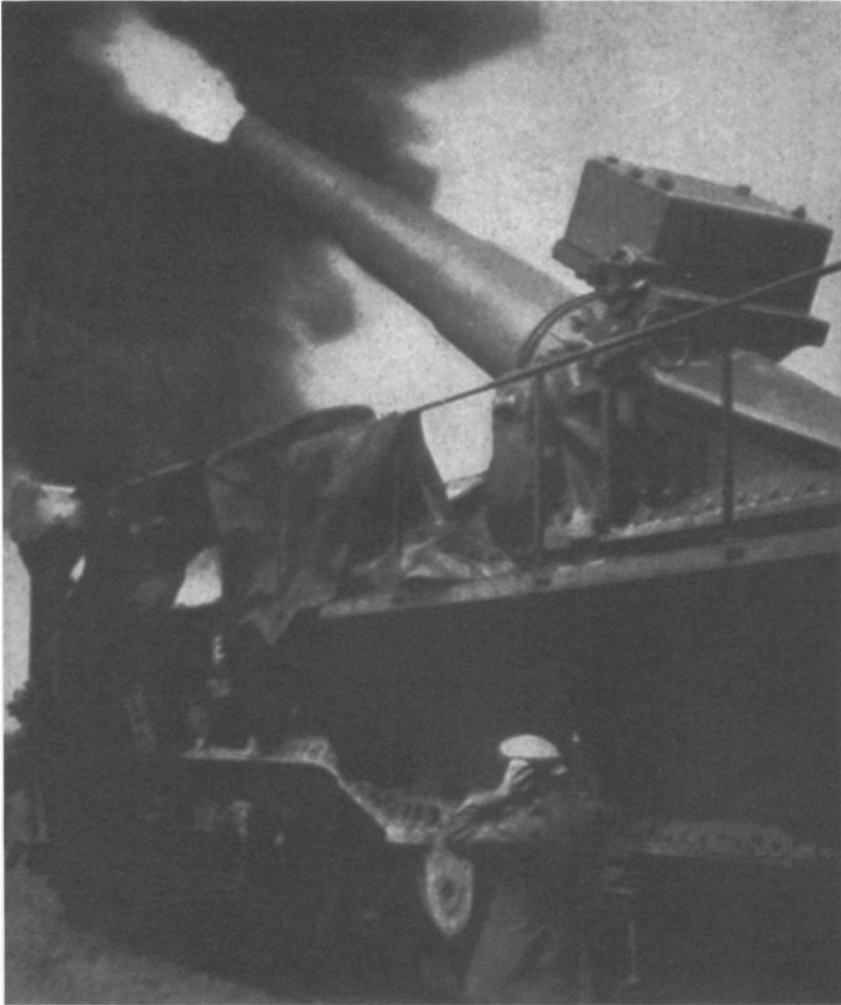
Figure 5. "The firing of German 24-cm railroad artillery before Verdun 1916," photograph, in Hermann Rex, *Der Weltkrieg in seiner rauhen Wirklichkeit* (1926).
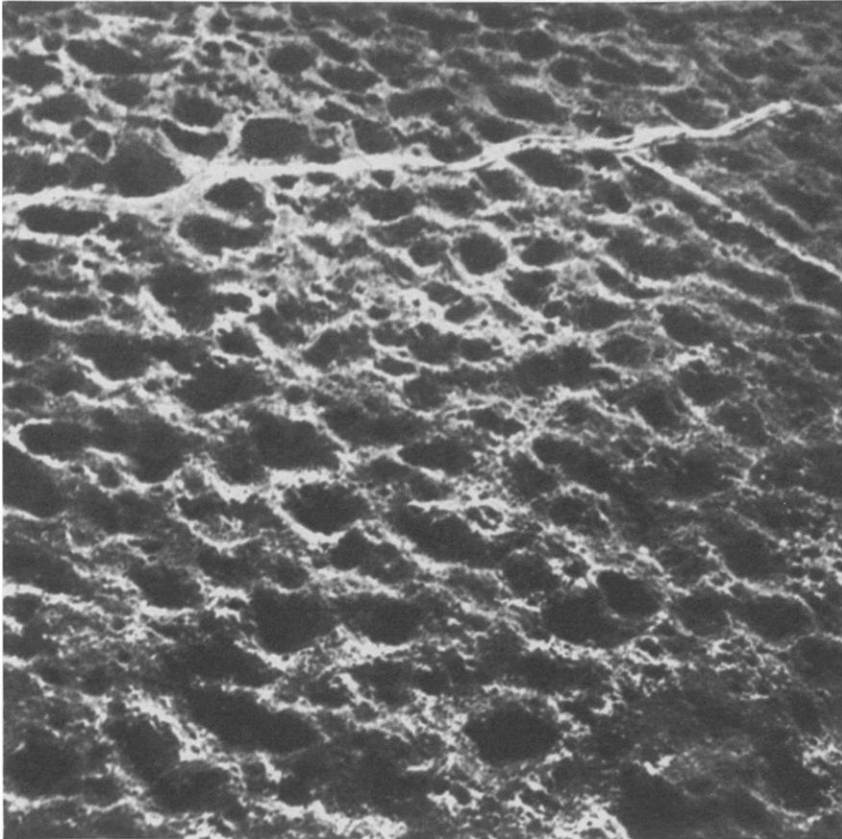
Figure 6. "Demolished grounds around a former German artillery position at Chemin des Dames. 1917," photograph, in Hermann Rex, *Der Weltkrieg in seiner rauhen Wirklichkeit* (1926).

the war effort. Since it wasn't organized until 1916, however, Rex obviously relied on other sources and manipulated images, including some of the most egregious cases of photographs staged behind the lines and later presented as authentic battle photographs.[42]

The appearance of German casualties indicates that the political right could no longer avoid showing dead and wounded German soldiers;

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42.   For examples, see Dewitz 271-74.

subsequent photographic albums also dealt with the problem of horror-photos by attempting to transfigure the memory of the war from images of repulsive disfigurement, aimless destruction, and deprivation on the homefront to war as a test of manliness, the honor of self-sacrifice, and romantic, redemptive death. The dead were shown either in small doses at the end of long photographic albums or frugally sprinkled throughout them, carefully avoiding any sense of mounting physical suffering and destruction by quickly following such images with resting, waiting, fighting soldiers or shelled enemy landscapes and buildings. In this careful way, horror-photos were redefined as part of the counter-discourse to Friedrich's book; though meager, their use, in the words of Detlev Hoffmann, was nonetheless crucial: "So that the war as something horrible would not remain in the memory, the horrifying itself had to be heroized."[43] War was no longer made to seem without German victims; they were discreetly shown, including some gruesome German corpses in Rex's book, in order to underscore the "true" meaning of heroism and honor as noble self-sacrifice and to broaden the appeal of nationalism as a vindication of those who made the greatest sacrifice for their country. Typically, however, German dead are seen from a distance, nearly indistinguishable from the landscape and debris in which they are found and with no discernible facial features.

Rex's image of a lifesize figure of Christ on the cross left undamaged between two bombed buildings is also typical of patriotic photo albums, in which captions marking these phenomena resonate with the wartime slogan "With God on our Side." The patriotic use of Christian symbols contrasts sharply with Friedrich's narrative, which rejected the reification of religious iconography and indicted the collaboration of the Church and the military.

Perhaps most polemical, though, is Rex's use of several images that are identical to those published by Friedrich, thereby directly contesting the meaning Friedrich had assigned them and recontextualizing them in a nationalist discourse. Aside from the shocking closeups of disfigured faces, some of Friedrich's mostly grisly images were those of severely burned bodies. Among his 600 photographs, Rex published a handful of such pictures, including two that are clearly only slightly differently-cropped versions of photographs used by Friedrich. One of these shows

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43.   Hoffmann, *Die Dekoration der Gewalt, Kunst und Medien im Faschismus* (Gießen: Anabas-Verlag Kampf, 1979), quoted in Dewitz 271.

burned bodies trapped in a destroyed tank. Friedrich's caption, "Human remains of a battered armored car,"[44] declines to identify the individuals as national subjects, universalizing the identity of the burned victims and striving for an emotional appeal. Rex's caption for the nearly identical image, reproduced more darkly, assumes a gloating tone:

> Tank subdued by battle flame throwers. Although tanks can be employed to great advantage in charging German lines, they also provide a good target for German defense equipment. The heavy armor-plating cannot be used by the gunners when, enveloped by fire, gas and smoke, they suffocate. The picture also shows how a man inside the tank with a heavily wounded hand tries to grasp the tank opening in his death struggle.[45]

Rex's caption identifies the dead as non-German and implies gratification with the image of an outwitted and outmaneuvered enemy that provided a "good target" for German artillery.[46]

The second horror-image deployed in both texts depicts a burned body next to a downed aircraft. Friedrich is brief and darkly sarcastic: "A 'meritorious' achievement." Rex writes, "After the air battle. The blackened and mutilated French war pilot next to his burned and demolished flying machine."[47] Friedrich's comment again dismisses the importance of the figure's nationality, instead challenging notions of honor, courage, and patriotism for which medals recognizing "meritorious achievement" were dispensed by all combatant countries. Rex's remarks center on the nationality of the figure; thinly disguised by the seeming neutrality of his tone is a distinct satisfaction with the evidence of a thoroughly vanquished enemy. Burning was regarded as the best way to insure the destruction of the enemy, its horrifying results comforting to patriots who saw in the twisted wreckage and charred bodies a superiority of German character and greater will to win.[48] Rex's book ends, not with images of invalids and graveyards, but with the firing of cannons on the small fortified island of Helgoland in the

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44.   Friedrich, *War Against War* (1987) 87.
45.   Rex 194. All translations are mine unless otherwise noted.
46.   This photograph also appears in a later photo album where the soldiers are identified as English. See *Kamerad im Westen: Ein Bericht in 221 Bildern* (Frankfurt/Main: Societats-Verlag, 1930) 152. The photographic credit is Archive of Dr. Bossert in Berlin.
47.   Friedrich, *War Against War* (1987) 91; Rex 338.
48.   See Peter Fritzsche, *A Nation of Fliers: German Aviation and the Popular Imagination* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1992) 93-95.

North Sea off the German mainland after the ceasefire in November 1918, and the return of German troops through the Brandenburg Gate, flags flying. This image portrays an army "undefeated in the field."

That Rex was responding to the pacifist discourse is spelled out in the forward to his book which refers to those "on all sides who wish to pale into insignificance the memory of the events of the World War and the undying achievements of the German front-line soldiers." Rex asserts that only the powerful pictures he presents authentically reveal the true nature of war: "the horror of the battle, of being shot at by infantry, machine-guns, artillery, and mine-throwers, of experiencing aerial bombs, gas, but also the ravages of wind and weather, excessive heat and icy cold, rain and snow endured unprotected for years!" Not death and mass destruction, but the rugged individual in a primal struggle against the enemy and the elements portray the horror — and the glory — of war. What motivated the soldier's bravery was "the deepest moral feeling of selflessness, of the will to self-sacrifice for a higher moral idea, for the protection of the Fatherland." What lends the struggle true nobility is that it was not conducted merely to defend one's own mortal existence but to protect nationalist ideals. Finally, Rex declares that the understanding the viewer will acquire through these images will bind him to "the undying spirit of the undefeated German army," whose dedication to these higher ideas "has made a people great and strong."[49] Refusing not only to admit defeat, but effectively dismissing the devastating effect of the war on the German economy in favor of the "spiritual" rejuvenation provided by militarism, Rex constructs and reinforces his argument not only through the ordering of his photographs but by his positivist interpretations of gruesome war imagery, including the reinterpretation of two of Friedrich's most horrible pictures.

As Bernd Hüppauf has suggested, the emotionally detached and amoral representation of mass environmental destruction and death was already adumbrated by the pictorial convention of the picturesque, a visual code that embodied intimations of violent destruction and helped create the perception of war as "natural." This, in turn, allowed "the mild thrill of the picturesque [to] be replaced with sublime horror," and reified nineteenth-century Romanticism in a way that allowed the heroic

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49.   Rex, "Vorwort," in *Der Weltkrieg in seiner rauhen Wirklichkeit*. This forward is omitted from the second edition in 1927 which is given the subtitle "Frontkämpferwerk," but is included in the third edition of the same year.

to be identified not with geologic but "manmade physical cataclysm."[50] On another level, the ideology of nationalism justified the physical destruction of "others" and their territory and legitimized the mythology and visual consolidation of the soldier-male as a "hero" and defender of German sovereignty. While Friedrich's book represented a relentlessly mounting, visually explicit subjection to the experience of human suffering that was heightened and emotionally manipulated by the accompanying text, nationalist narratives employed an emotionally detached and amoral perspective tied to a picturesque aesthetic.

Later patriotic photographic albums such as Franz Schauwecker's *So war der Krieg* (1928), Ernst Jünger's *Das Antlitz des Ersten Weltkreig* (1930), and Georg Soldan's *Der Weltkrieg im Bild* (1930) extended the rhetorical devices established by Hermann Rex.[51] Franz Schauwecker, for example, in his introduction to *So war der Krieg* [*Thus was the War*], writes an impassioned paean to the birth of nationalism on the battlefield of war, verbally "heroizing the horrible" in a series of literary images composed of explosions, sweat and mud, of "earth made holy by blood," and in photographic images of battle of which almost a third are devoted to explosions.[52] The remarkable analogy between manmade explosions and the symbolic "merging" of the self with the nation suggests a mystification of militarist ideology which draws on the romantic notions of the "sublime" and "creation through destruction"; at the same time these images suggest explosive power as a superior form of "manliness" in which masculinity is charged with the birth of the nation.[53] While the new nation to be conceived out of war was originally construed as freed from materialist corruption by the expressionists, for the radical right it was a new, more militarized nation based on a community of men.

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50.   Bernd Hüppauf, "The Emergence of Modern War Imagery in Early Photography," *History & Memory* 5.1 (1991): 138-39.

51.   The only other example of an antimilitarist photographic album in the late Weimar period (aside from the continual reprints of Friedrich's 1924 photographic album) was John Heartfield and Kurt Tucholsky's picture book *Deutschland, Deutschland über Alles* published in 1929. It was a caustic satire on Weimar's political and military leadership which provided a contrast with patriotic photographic texts not only for its subject matter, but particularly for the way the technique of photographic montage problematized the claims to authenticity and transparency of photographic representation.

52.   Franz Schauwecker, *So war der Krieg: 200 Kampfaufnahmen aus der Front* (Berlin, 1928).

53.   See Maria Tatar, "Fighting for Life: Figurations of War, Women, and the City in the Work of Otto Dix," *German Politics and Society* 32 (1994): 28-57.

   The most polemical of the patriotic photo albums, Schauwecker's
book suggests that nationalism can encompass all who are willing to
recognize and embrace it, that it is a cross-class phenomenon, which
will not only strengthen the future nation but offer equality of status to
each individual within it. Schauwecker asserts the authenticity of his
photographs as "the true face of war, undeformed, not prettified, and
revealed in the hard, candid, unchanged objectivity of the photographs
of the depressing tragedy of the modern war . . . a diary in pictures."[54]
The "tragedy," of course, is not the destruction caused by warfare but
Germany's defeat. Schauwecker then sets up and knocks down a vulgar
pacifist analysis of the war:

> The pacifist sees in the World War only a war of machines, of com-
> peting cannon factories, to the exclusion of the personal and the spir-
> itual, and sees the only decision left to personal judgement as one of
> the technical qualities of the means of war. The driving force for him
> is the market and the economic goal. This he calls "the Idea of war."
> As a result he has only this to see, which he is able to grasp: the
> mutual slaughter which he calls "foolish," and the decimation of the
> population. In the end, the war for him is only the most miserable
> consequence of capitalist economy. Whoever in modern warfare can
> see only this, he is certainly constructed like a calculating machine
> and also works like one.

Though couched in general terms, Schauwecker's attack reads like a
response to Friedrich's appeal to militarists in the introduction to his
second volume of *War Against War*. Having dismissed the "ostensible"
basis of an antiwar perspective, whether founded on Friedrich's over-
simplified analysis or not, Schauwecker proceeds to challenge the moral
grounds for a pacifist stance by questioning the personal integrity, or
"manliness" of pacifists:

> Whoever in war only sees "the foolish slaughter," he proves thereby
> that he himself saw nothing different in the war. Whoever, as a result
> of this becomes a pacifist, realizes that for him his own naked life mat-
> ters above all. I confess that I hold such people to be unimportant. If
> he at least in his own war experience still had a sense of dreadful trag-
> edy, of dark greatness and possessed a sense of seeing destiny in the
> war, which he rejected, then one could, with sympathy before such a
> lived and honest conviction, experience respect for such an error. For

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   54.   Schauwecker, "Vorwort der Herausgeber," *So war der Krieg* 3.

the average pacifist of our day, however, one never loses the feeling
that he, when all is said and done, is cowardly and womanish and that
here is a hole in his character.[55]

Terms such as "womanish" were, if not an allusion to homosexuality, at
best a form of feminization that attributed "character weakness" to a
lack of manliness.[56]

Ernst Jünger's *Das Antlitz des Weltkrieges. Fronterlebnisse deutscher
Soldaten* [*The Countenance of the World War: Experiences of German
Soldiers on the Front*],[57] was meant as a cultural history of the war as
represented through soldiers' descriptions of their experiences and their
pictures from the battlefields. It follows a pattern similar to that of other
patriotic photo albums. In his forward to *Das Antlitz*, "Krieg und Licht-
bild" [War and Photography], Jünger, a writer and novelist of the intel-
lectual right, also takes on the pacifist discourse, attacking the "one-
sidedness" of Friedrich's book without explicitly naming it:

> Insofar as life tends to forget very quickly the difficulties it has
> endured, pictures that make the misery of war present are especially
> valuable. A photo anthology cannot exclude such photos any more
> than it can consist only of them, though there have been attempts at the
> latter. Appealing only to our revulsion to suffering would be a betrayal
> of our moral essence, as would a beautification of such a serious mat-
> ter as that which was embodied by this war.[58]

Jünger equates a simple humanist appeal to "our revulsion to suffer-
ing" with a betrayal of "moral essence," which may be defined as sub-
jectivity subordinated to nationalist ideals. Though allowing that images
"that make the misery of war present," are valuable, Jünger includes
very few of them.

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55.   Schauwecker, "Vorwort der Herausgeber" 7-8.
56.   The conviction that homosexuals were a threat to Germany's military strength
was so strongly entrenched that even advocates of the rights of homosexuals felt com-
pelled to attribute to them a "respectable manliness" which would aid the national struggle
for survival. Benedict Friedländer, an early champion of homosexual rights, felt it neces-
sary to deny that freedom for homosexuals would weaken the nation's ability to wage war.
Benedict Friedländer, *Jahrbuch für sexuelle Zwischenstufen* vol. 1 (1905) 463-70, cited in
George Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality: Respectability and Abnormal Sexuality in
Modern Europe* (New York: H. Fertig, 1985) 34.
57.   Ernst Jünger, ed., *Das Antlitz des Weltkrieges. Fronterlebnisse deutscher Sol-
daten. Mit etwa 200 photo-graphischen Aufnahmen auf Tafeln, Kartenanhang sowie einer
chronologischen Kriegsgeschichte in Tabelle* (Berlin, 1930).
58.   Translated in *New German Critique* 59 (Spring/Summer 1993): 25.

The frontispage to Jünger's book is an image of sleeping soldiers in a trench with one sentry on duty. They are drenched in sunlight and the caption, "Calm before the storm," creates a sense of anticipation. The two hundred photographs which follow attempt to convey the progress of the war as a single linear narrative in chronological development, including troop charges and countercharges. An image of German soldiers solemnly burying comrades in the field while a mine explodes in the background shows that they did not neglect their duty even under adverse conditions. This image contrasts sharply with those of mass graves published by Friedrich.

An unusual section in Jünger's book, and one obviously not based on amateur soldiers' photographs, consists of twenty-four facial photographs of "enemy types," among them French, Belgian, Italian, English, Russian and American as well as Indian, Portuguese, Japanese, Arabic, Sudanese, Senegalese and Somalian soldiers. Though uncharacteristic of most patriotic photo albums, it is a typical display of German racist physiognomic "science" which turned to social Darwinism as a tool for explaining "national" behavior. Jünger highlights and focuses on the "otherness" of the enemy while the antiwar humanist discourse exemplified by Friedrich attempts to assimilate and overcome otherness.[59]

The final pages contain over a dozen images of corpses, largely identified as enemy dead. The impact of these images as horror-photos is blunted by their small number, the distant views, and their consignment to the end of a long pictorial narrative meant to reconstruct exciting battle campaigns; after witnessing the "battle" between German and enemy troops throughout the book, we are meant to cheer for "our" side, admire the heroism of the few representative dead, and perhaps feel relief at the sight of enemy casualties. Jünger's concluding image, "The Calm After the Storm. A Field Cross of the Christ Figure Remains Undamaged," depicts a statue of Christ in an empty field with a dramatic sky as a backdrop. Once again we are meant to read this final picture of an undamaged Christ as a sign that "God was with us." As

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59.   Germans were not the only ones to employ the methods of Social Darwinism. J. H. Morgan, the author of a British inquiry into the *Kriegtagebücher* attempted to turn this tool against the Germans by concluding that the puzzle of German "moral perversion" was "one for the anthropologist . . .[and that] there may be some force in the contention of those who believe that the Prussian is not a member of the Teutonic family at all, but a 'throw back' to some Tartar stock." J. H. Morgan, *German Atrocities: An Official Investigation* (London, 1916) 52-53, quoted in Horne & Kramer 12-13.

Bodo von Dewitz has suggested, the statue of Christ, which was actually photographed at the beginning of the war, represents both an end to the "last" storm and the "calm" before the next one.[60] In the next one, the fallen, like Christ, will be symbolically resurrected.

   The heroic idea of war culminated in the supremely impersonal landscapes taken from the air. Aerial photographs such as those of shelled territory, published in the press and in patriotic photographic albums, helped confirm the technological efficiency of the German war effort and the photographic efficiency made possible by balloon, Zeppelin, or airplane.[61] Because these photos were devoid of any humans, who were too small to be seen from the extreme distance of the air cameras, the images were further aestheticized, reduced to surface patterns composed of dugouts, trenches, supply and communication lines. The space of aerial landscape was emptied of moral content and reconstituted in technical terms.[62] The impersonal visual abstraction of the modern environment of warfare evoked an aestheticized fascination and abstract mathematical quantification that allowed for a positivist, "scientific" projection of war and could be used to justify imperialist aggression.[63] While the humanist image of the suffering individual seems inadequate, it is nonetheless difficult to find forms of photographic representation capable of capturing the way that thousands of soldiers are uniformly

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   60.   Dewitz 280-81.
   61.   Cf. Paul Virilio, *War and Cinema: The Logistics of Perception* (London/New York: Verso, 1989). Virilio asserts that the history of war is primarily the history of radically changing fields of perception associated with new forms of illumination — searchlights, camera-pigeons, military aviation — and new forms of vision, such as "telescopic sight." These new forms of perception suggest that the camera lens functioned less as a documentary device and more as the technologically efficient "eyes" of the military, becoming a new weapon in the battle for control both during and after the war. Also see Sabine Hake's review of Virilio's book in *Film Review* 14 (1990): 40-42.
   62.   See Hüppauf, "Experiences of Modern Warfare and the Crisis of Representation" 56-59. Not surprisingly this evidence of German technological superiority, in the form of the airplane, gave rise to a new heroic imagery, that of the daring young pilots exemplified by the myth of the "Red Baron" Manfred von Richthofen. Airmen became the perfect emblems of German superiority as tough-minded heroes who were technologically capable and ruthlessly nationalistic. See Fritzsche 85.
   63.   Exactly this kind of representation of warfare was experienced by the American public during the 1991 Gulf War through the highly abstract and technical images produced on aerial video screens. On the American side, at least, it became the dominant experience of the war, representing one of the most disturbing manifestations of mathematically coordinated and depersonalized imagery of mass destruction ever invented, effectively obscuring any clear realization of the thousands of Iraqi soldiers and civilians killed. Also noted by Hüppauf, "Experiences of Modern Warfare and the Crisis of Representation" 73.

subsumed, or mass populations are physically destroyed by military tech-
nology, without distancing the viewer from the subject. What is clear is
that technology and nationalism were inextricably bound together dur-
ing and after World War I in Germany and helped pave the way for the
further technological mobilization of society and the culminating disas-
ter of the twentieth century. Jünger, a decorated war-veteran whose first
book, *In the Storm of Steel*, was published in 1920, was well-known for
his hallucinatory descriptions of mechanized warfare, its relation to
heightened perception, and his ardent embrace of technology as the basis
for a new society which later influenced the National Socialists.[64]

In *Der Weltkrieg im Bild* [*Portrait of the World War*][65] by Georg Sol-
dan, official advisor to the Reichsarchiv in Potsdam, the familiar images
are recycled, reinforcing through repetition a photographic repertoire
already firmly embedded in patriotic visual culture. Soldan maintains an
explicit polemical note in his 1927 edition accusing "circles of soft pac-
ifists" of endeavoring to exploit war photographs for their own ends.[66]
By 1930, however, the pacifists were deemed less of a threat and this
reference was deleted from the two-page forward.

Unlike Friedrich's book, the photographic albums of Rex, Schau-
wecker, Jünger, and Soldan emphasized not death and dying but cour-
age, manliness, and fighting. In images of marching, fighting and
preparing to fight, it was the heroism and daring of the army that
became the lesson for postwar youth to learn, with the poor outcome of
the war blamed on other causes.[67] The patriotic war albums gave little
sense of the vast scale of human destruction wrought by the war, nor
was there a sense of the individuality of soldiers; there were no facial
closeups of living soldiers or uncomfortable proximity to the dead.
While Friedrich's sense of suffering depended on an emotional identifi-

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64.   Jünger argued that the technological mechanization of war extended to the struc-
ture of the modern city and he projected a right-wing utopian image of the modern city in
a constant state of mobilization. See Anton Kaes, "Notes on Mobilization and Modernity,"
New German Critique 59 (Spring/Summer 1993): 105-17.

65.   Georg Soldan, *Der Weltkrieg im Bild: Originalaufnahmen des Kriegs-, Bild-
und Filmamtes aus der modernen Materialschlacht*, vol. 1 (Berlin & Oldenburg, 1927.
2nd Edition. 1930).

66.   Soldan, "Zum Geleit!" *Der Weltkrieg im Bild*, n.p., quoted in Dewitz 271-72.

67.   A concomitant ideological shift in the rhetoric of war memorial inscriptions after
World War I, as compared to those after the Franco-Prussian war, is evident in inscriptions
which no longer proclaimed victory but instead glorified the will to do battle as the highest
good. See Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World War* 167.

cation with the human face, the patriotic albums were deliberately oblique in this regard. Because amateur photographs of soldiers looking at the camera were eliminated, the "face" of war was not a human face, but an impersonal, heroic "idea" of war, represented without specific dates and places that included images of soldiers staged during the war and presented afterwards as authentic. The purpose of amateur photography during the war in establishing identity was thereby inverted through the erasure of individual identity and the abstraction of subjective experience into generalized heroic narratives. The negation of subjectivity and the very concept of an autonomous subject meant closing off the possibility of emotional empathy on the part of the viewer and reconstituting the identity of the soldier as a constituent element of a technological machine, a political role carried out in a military capacity with which the viewer was meant to identify.

The Limits of the Pacifist Discourse

Friedrich presented a political perspective that effectively reduced the ideology of militarism to simple economic motives; individual refusal to serve or to perpetuate symbols of violence constituted his primary programmatic defense against militarization. To underscore these calls for individual resistance he employed searing war imagery together with text to evoke gut-wrenching horror at the consequences of war and compassion for its victims. A characteristic aspect of the pacifist discourse he created, however, was the presentation of war as having only victims and no perpetrators. The weakness of pacifism lies precisely in the humanist representation of war participants as universal subjects/victims with no historical specificity or agency.[68] The viewer gains no larger sense of the political dynamics or greater social dimensions of the cataclysmic event that is presented as a timeless, placeless War. Friedrich attempted to construct an alternative visual collective memory that sought to destabilize heroic myths of the war and to keep

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68. Similarly, it should not be surprising that attempts to represent the Holocaust as a parable of universal suffering also have failed. A recent example is the showing of Steven Spielberg's film *Schindler's List* in ethnically mixed school districts throughout the United States. The assumption that victimized European Jews would be perceived as universal subjects and improve relations between blacks and Jews in this country established a policy which instead has helped trigger bitter controversy as different ethnic groups compete over whose history has been more traumatic. See Michael Andre Berstein, "The *Schindler's List* Effect," *The American Scholar* 63 (1994): 429-32.

alive the painful memories repressed in official histories. The practical application of this perspective, however, did not go beyond the subjective expression of compassion to insight into collective struggle. Though ardent in his appeals, Friedrich created a narrative that emphasized not the critical causes of war but war's terrible consequences; his political program could not channel antiwar sentiment into organized political opposition to the rise of National Socialism in the late Weimar period because it relied fundamentally on individual, idealist, moral outrage. The power of the nationalist appeal was in its construction of a positive national identity, one that rejected the notion of universal kinship in favor of a heroic German particularity that was best expressed by an imagined, unified, national community rather than the humanist subjectivity of the individual.