



AARHUS UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF ARTS

Brief summary

Poetic Potentials of War

Jünger, Sebald, and Combat and Body in Modern War Literature

Kasper Green Krejberg

How is war described in literature, when the battle is no longer its decisive event? Recent western war literature has answered this question in several ways, but only a few studies have examined these answers systemically. Confronted by weapons of mass destruction and military strategies of extermination aimed at civilian rather than military targets, the writing of war in the twentieth century has removed itself from the combat-oriented mode of description and followed other paths in its struggles to actualise the poetic potentials of war. In this dissertation I trace the most important of these paths: the move out of the combat zone and into the human body. Carrying out detailed analyses of three novels about World War Two – by W.G. Sebald, Kurt Vonnegut, and Christoph Ransmayr – the dissertation shows how this body-oriented war literature depicts the non-uniformed, sensitive, and exposed body as the main point of identification for a democratically based notion of war in modern western societies. As a counterpoint I also analyse Ernst Jünger's famous literary description of World War One which has – in many ways – formed the basis of the modern combat-oriented aesthetics of war, known from popular war movies and computer games, and characterising the conception of war as an efficient tool of conflict resolution.

In relation to the acquisition of his doctoral degree Kasper Green Krejberg MA has handed in his dissertation to Faculty of Arts, Aarhus University. Faculty of Arts has accepted the dissertation for defense on January 6th 2012 at 13.15 PM at the following address: Aarhus University, Aesthetic Studies, Langelandsgade 139, building 1584 room 124. The dissertation is available for reading on location at Aesthetic Studies, Langelandsgade 141 (139), building 1586, room 220, Aarhus C, Denmark.

The Defence will be conducted in Danish.

Aarhus University, Aesthetic Studies, December 14th, 2011