



Laughter in the Trenches: Humour and Front Experience in German First World War Narratives

Jakub Kazecki

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Laughter in the Trenches: Humour and Front Experience in German First World War Narratives explores the appearances and functions of humour and laughter in selected novels and short stories based on autobiographical experiences written by authors during the war and in the Weimar Era (1919-1933). The author of this book focuses on popular and lesser-known works of German literature that played an important role in the socio-political life of the Weimar Republic: Storm of Steel by Ernst Junger (1920), Advance from Mons 1914 by Walter Bloem (1916), The Case of Sergeant Grischa by Arnold Zweig (1927), and All Quiet on the Western Front by Erich Maria Remarque (1929). The author shows that these works often share surprisingly similar narrative strategies in describing humorous experiences and laughter of soldiers to justify direct violence and oppressive power structures, regardless of their ideological assignment and their popular and critical reception. This book also examines the parodic imitations of All Quiet on the Western Front, the German text All Quiet on the Trojan Front by Emil Marius Reuark (1930) and The American film So Quiet on the Canine Front by Zion Myers and Jules White (1931) as significant polemical contributions that use humoristic strategies to stress or undermine the elements of the original text.

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