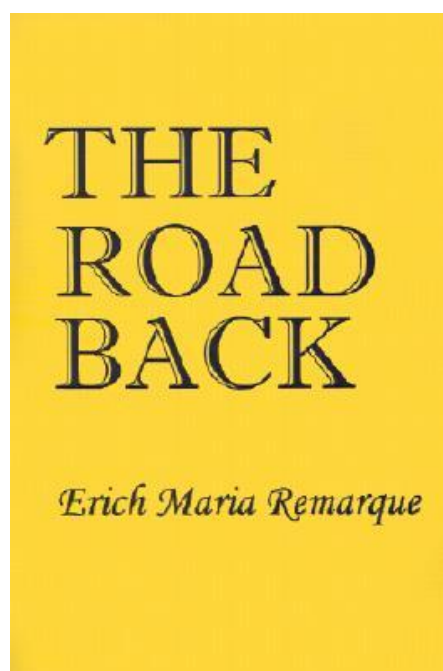




The Road Back

Erich Maria Remarque

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The Road Back

Erich Maria Remarque

The Road Back Erich Maria Remarque

After surviving several horrifying years in the inferno of the Western Front, a young German soldier and his cohorts return home at the end of WW1. Their road back to life in civilian world is made arduous by their bitterness about what they find in post-war society. A captivating story, one of Remarque's best.

The Road Back Details

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metaphor says

How near they come together, yesterday and today, death and life!

*

A vague, threatening something seems to be sneaking upon me; it retreats when I try to grapple with it, it disperses when I advance upon it, and then it gathers again behind me and watches.

*

I see now that it has all been in vain—I have been running about and about, I have knocked again at all the doors of my youth and desired to enter in there; I thought, surely it must admit me again, for I am still young and have wished so much to forget—but it fled always before me like a will-o'-the-wisp, it fell away without sound, it crumbled like tinder at my lightest touch. And I could not understand—Surely here at least something of it must remain? I attempted it again and again, and as a result made myself merely ridiculous and wretched. But now I know, I know now that a still, silent war has ravaged this country of my memories also; I know now it would be useless for me to look farther. Time lies between like a great gulf; I cannot get back. There is nothing for it; I must go forward, march onward, anywhere, it matters nothing, I have no goal.

*

Was there no flash of lightning then that tore me away? Did no country suddenly founder and go down about me, leaving me only surviving, all else this moment perished and lost to me for ever?

*

Unconsciously I begin to walk faster, breathe deeper. I will have it again—I must have it again. It shall come again, else what reason is there to live?

*

Ach, love—it is a torch falling into an abyss, revealing nothing but only how deep it is!

*

[...] but where man is unhappy, what help is there then in such fickle, ambiguous things as words? They can only make matters worse.

*

The noiseless streams of the earth ebb and flow, and my blood flows with them; it is borne along with them and has part in them all. Through the warm dark of the earth it is flowing with the meaning of crystals and quartzes, it is in the secret sound of the weight with which drops sink down among the roots and assemble to thin runnels in search of the springs. With them it breaks out again from under the ground, it is in brooks and in rivers, in the glistening banks, in the breadth of the sea and in the. moist silver vapour the sun draws up again to the clouds—it circles and circles, it takes ever more and more of me with it and empties it into the earth and underground streams; the chest sinks and collapses, the arms fall away, slowly and without pain the body disappears; it is gone; now only the fabric, only the husks remain. The body has become the trickling of subterranean springs, the talk of the grasses, moving wind, rustling leaf, and silent, resounding sky. The meadow comes nearer, flowers grow through it, blossoms sway over it; I have sunk down, forgotten, poured away under poppies and yellow marsh marigolds, over which butterflies and dragon-flies hover.

Kalkwerk says

Ende des Ersten Weltkriegs: Der junge Ernst Birkholz liegt mit seinen Kameraden an der Westfront, Gerüchte vom bevorstehenden Frieden machen bereits die Runde, grausam gestorben wird weiterhin. Dann ist es plötzlich vorbei, die Kompanie tritt die Heimreise an. Doch was die Soldaten im Schützengraben als Wiederkehr in ein Idyll imaginiert haben, scheitert an den schweren Traumatisierungen der jungen Kriegsteilnehmer und der mangelnden Bereitschaft der Daheimgebliebenen, die Soldaten als Veränderte in

die Gesellschaft zu reintegrieren.

So zeigt sich etwa Ernsts Mutter schockiert über den Schimpfwortgebrauch ihres Jungen und seinen Zigarettenkonsum, sodass sie dem Sohn von vornherein die Möglichkeit nimmt, mit ihr über die wahren Schrecken des Krieges zu reden. Kaum daheim flüchten die Rückkehrer daher zurück in die Gesellschaft ihrer Kameraden, deren Zusammenhalt aber fernab der Front nach und nach zu bröckeln beginnt. Während einige Figuren Erlösung schließlich nur noch im Freitod finden, gelangt Ernst nach einem schweren Nervenzusammenbruch am Ende des Textes zu einem desillusionierten, aber gleichzeitig hoffnungsvollen Blick in die Zukunft.

Kaum ein Text hat mich in letzter Zeit so beeindruckt und berührt wie Remarques "Der Weg zurück". In einem balancierten Wechsel von lakonischer und metaphorischer Beschreibung gelingt es dem Autor, ein authentisch wirkendes Zeitportrait der unmittelbaren Nachkriegsmonate zu zeichnen und gleichermaßen einen Blick in die tiefe seelische Zerrüttung einer Jugend zu ermöglichen, der im Schützengraben die Unschuld, die Lebensfähigkeit und die Möglichkeit zu einem gesunden emotionalen Selbsterhalt genommen wurde.

Die episodentypisch aufgebauten Kapitel beleuchten jeweils unterschiedliche Aspekte der Heimkehrerproblematik. Eine der intensivsten Sequenzen war für mich die Beschreibung eines stummen Demonstrationszuges von Kriegsinvaliden, in der mit kaum zu ertragener Detailgenauigkeit die unvorstellbaren Verletzungen der ehemaligen Soldaten katalogisiert werden.

Zu den größten erzählerischen Leistungen Remarques zählt allerdings auch das Vermögen, heitere Lebensmomente der Figuren in Szene zu setzen, ohne dass sich diese wie Fremdkörper im globalen Schreckensinferno des Textes ausnehmen. So versuchen die Protagonisten etwa, in der aufblühenden Unterhaltungskultur der Nachkriegszeit Zerstreuung zu finden, wobei folgende Szene mir zu einem außerordentlichen Lachanfall während meiner Zugfahrt in Richtung Arbeit verholten hat:

"Übrigens gut, daß du da bist, heute ist Tanzturnier, wir machen alle mit, es gibt erstklassige Preise!" [...] Gerade ruft der Mann mit der Crysantheme zur Foxtrott-Konkurrenz aus. Es melden sich nur wenige Paare. Willy geht nicht, er schreitet zum Parkett. "Er hat doch keine Ahnung davon", prustet Karl. Gespannt hängen wir in unseren Stühlen, um zu sehen, was das gibt. Die Löwenbändigerin kommt Willy entgegen. Er reicht ihr mit großer Gebärde den Arm. Die Musik beginnt.

In diesem Moment verwandelt Willy sich in ein wildgewordenes Kamel. Er springt in die Luft und hinkt, hüpf, kreiselt, er schmeißt die Dame hin und her, dann rast er im kurzen Schweinsgalopp durch den Saal, die Zirkusreiterin nicht vor sich, sondern neben sich, so daß sie an seinem ausgestreckten Arm Klimmzüge macht, während er volle Freiheit nach der anderen Seite hat, ohne Sorge, ihr die Füße zu zertrampeln. [...] Kein Mensch im Saal zweifelt daran, einen bisher unbekannten Meister des Überfoxtrotts vor sich zu sehen.

Zusammenfassend: 5 Sterne und eine dicke Leseempfehlung von mir. Ich habe den Text übrigens für 20 Cent auf einem Flohmarkt erstanden - reichlich unterbezahlt!

Josie says

This is the sequel to All Quiet on the Western Front, and it may be more quietly powerful. There are some of the snippets of gruesome battle scenes, but this book that takes place after World War I shows the soldiers disillusioned with the war's purpose, alienated from their friends and life before the war and adrift when they try to resume their lives at home. Trained as soldiers in a brutal war, they have a hard time finding their place in society and find themselves missing the camaraderie of their fellow soldiers.

Josh says

"Yes, it is a hard thing to part, but to come back again, that is sometimes harder."

This sequel to *All Quiet on the Western Front* (AQ) is less famous, but I liked it better. While AQ focused on men in the trenches during WWI and the horror they faced, *The Road Back* tells of the same men as they return to their old homes.

Many of these guys went off to the war while they were still boys, full of piss and vinegar and patriotism. As they lived the horrors described in AQ for 3 or 4 years, everything at home went on as if they hadn't left. Only how can one not change during the experience of war? And when one returns, how can they fit neatly back into the space in society they had left? It is like changing the shape of a missing puzzle piece and then trying to fit it back into the whole puzzle, which had also changed shape.

And the pieces do not fit back into place. Spouses have found other lovers in their absence, formerly well-respected adults are now just men who were not there to guide the boys from childhood to manhood, etc.

I really liked this book and it is as relevant today as it was when it was written. I am told that the third of this "trilogy" by Remarque *Three Comrades* is also very good so I will seek it out and read that as well. I have been impressed with Remarque's writing, but can't put my finger on why. It's so simplistic, but maybe that's why it's so easy to read. Perhaps I will seek out more of his writings after this trilogy.

Lee says

PTSD in post-WWI Germany, the sequel to *All Quiet on the Western Front*. Episodic, not always linear, first-person narrator although it sometimes feels more like a close third, or even a sort of omniscient first-person when, thanks to Ernst's deep connection with his troubled former comrades, scenes are dramatized that the narrator couldn't know about (friend returning to the trenches alone at night and then shooting himself; how a room feels after another friend cuts open an artery and bleeds out). Teenagers taught to fight and survive, to kill and make it through, dreaming of home and returning alive, holding-up their return as their hope, have trouble reacclimating of course when they finally return and sit with loved ones and see the familiar landscape of their youth as a potential battlefield, have no patience for "fine phrases" about heroism or The Fatherland or anything along those lines, find their studies total bullshit, can't sit in a classroom and teach penmanship to 7 to 10 year olds when the horror they've experienced, the sense of betrayal, solely occupies their mind -- each of a handful of comrades not-so-deeply characterized (stage II case of disembodied proper noun syndrome) try to make their way back to a semblance of sustainable existence, some sort of coming to terms (Ernst ultimately finds a sort of peace via mindful/mystical communion with nature, lying down in the grass alone, just looking, listening, being), some not at all.

Lacks the drive and blatant high stakes of the other EMR novels I've read (I'm on a completist quest, FYI, and have five or six others on a shelf in order of publication ready to go this year). Almost started skimming midway but right when I started to think three-stars could devolve to two it picked-up and ended tremendously. As always with EMR, what's triggered completism, there are moments of extreme vividness, up there with Prince Andrei on his back looking at blue sky, Proust's elevating airplane, Leopold Bloom's kidney sliding in his frying pan, Bartlebooth's watercolors returning to the ocean, etc: in this, it's a war veteran sheep dog named Wolf fighting with the farmer's bulldog Pluto and then later doing what he's been

bred to do, excelling at herding sheep although he was raised on the battlefield (Wolf's road back is hard-wired); or when the comrades run to the square with their "faces of the trench" as the military led by a former comrade threatens to turn a machine gun on a crowd of labor protestors led by a former Jewish comrade; or a scene at an official military-sanctioned brothel when Ernst the narrator loses his virginity; the classroom scene when the young veteran students revolt against the principal's fine phrases of heroism and again at the end the courtroom scene when the comrades rise up against the judge and lawyer in defense of their friend's murder of a man who'd been macking on a woman who'd been his only beacon through it all.

Was worried about this one and a little disappointed until page 180 or so but from now on I'll be completely confident that EMR will deliver. He was dramatizing boredom and dissatisfaction, which always makes what follows all the better, although in this it felt like it went on a few dozen pages too long and wasn't sufficiently concentrated?

But generally this is another great EMR novel -- since it's about PTSD (well before the term was coined), it lacks the sense that death could visit with every turned page, but a worthwhile way to spend two long sittings today at jury duty. Always stretches of top-notch translated prose, although in this the translation, especially in dialogue, occasionally seemed wonky thanks most likely to old German slang rendered as old British slang. Also interesting in that it was published in 1931, so before the rise of the forces that would wreck everything hundreds of times over in a decade or so (no lessons in this learned at all) -- those young students of Ernst's would grow up to be in their 30s during WWII and the teens at the end gleefully performing military exercises and calling WWI veterans cowards and traitors to The Fatherland foreshadow what's to come. Hunger and inflation are only touched on.

Generally, I think I'm interested in this era for reasons related to rising fascism worldwide and Trumpism, seeing our own times through the perspective of 80-100 years ago in Europe, the general sense of HEFT that runs through these novels that always elevates the prose (translated German is probably my favorite flavor in the English language), but also because I'm searching for Bolano's sources for the Hans Reiter section in 2666.

Here's a quotation representative of theme and translation (although the language in this bit is a little elevated since Ernst is waxing significantly) from right before he decides he can't be a schoolteacher:

"What am I able to teach you then? Should I tell you how to pull the string on a hand grenade, how best to throw it at a human being? . . . Should I mimic how a man with a stomach wound will groan, how one with a lung wound gurgles and one with a head wound whistles? More I do not know. More I have not learned.

Should I take you to the brown-and-green map there, move my finger across it and tell you that here love was murdered? Should I explain to you that the books you hold in your hands are but nets with which men design to snare your simple souls, to entangle you in the undergrowth of fine phrases, and in the barbed wire of falsified ideas?

I stand here before you, a polluted, a guilty man and can only implore you ever to remain as you are, never to suffer the bright light of your childhood to be misused as a blow flame of hate. About your brows still blows the breath of innocence. How then should I presume to teach you? Behind me, still pursuing, are the bloody years. -- How then can I venture among you? Must I not first become a man again myself?"

Vit Babenco says

The last combats and skirmishes... Peace is nearing... However death still keeps doing its dire work... And the dread doesn't let go.

"Gas shells!" shouts Willy, springing up.

We are all awake now and listening intently.

Wessling points into the air. "There they are! Wild geese!"

Moving darkly against the drab grey of the clouds is a streak, a wedge, its point steering toward the moon. It cuts across its red disc. The black shadows are plainly visible, an angle of many wings, a column of squalling, strange, wild cries, that loses itself in the distance.

"Off they go," growls Willy. "Damn it all – if only we could pull out like that! Two wings and away."

The war is over and the road back home lies ahead... For those who have managed to deceive death and survive.

The wide, grey square is much too big for us. Across it sweeps a bleak November wind smelling of decay and death. We are lined up between the canteen and the guard-room, more space we do not require. The wide, empty square about us wakes woeful memories. There, rank on rank, invisible, stand the dead.

The war is over but its echo is long and sorrowful: horrendous memories, nightmares, madness, nervous breakdowns, psychological traumas, suicides, alienation...

The things here are stronger – the things that differentiate us from one another are too powerful. The common interest is no longer decisive. It has broken up already, and given place to the interest of the individual. Now and then something still will shine through from that other time when we all wore the same rig, but already it is diminished and dim. These others here are still our comrades, and yet our comrades no longer – that is what is so sad. All else went west in the war, but comradeship we did believe, in; now only to find that what death could not do, life is achieving – it is driving us asunder.

The gory wave of war retreats and on the shore of peace crippled bodies, crippled minds, crippled souls and ruined fates are left... And generals are already readying new wars...

Teresa says

First time in 2014 I've read a book worthy of 5 stars. It's a brilliant book, I'm still overwhelmed by this book. It's so intense, so powerful and dramatic (**not** melodramatic), that I simply wasn't able to concentrate on anything while I still had some pages left to read.

It's been six years since the last time I read *All Quiet on the Western Front*, which still remains one of my favourite books, and only a couple of months ago I started to wonder whether Erich Maria Remarque had written any more books. And he had! So, the natural place to start with was with the so-called sequel to his

most famous novel. It starts in the last months of the war, in April 1918, but quickly moves to peacetime. Actually, you actually get to know more how life was in the trenches through the character's memories than during those 40 odd pages at the beginning. However, they are also interesting because they will serve as a contrast in the interaction between a group of six or seven soldiers who were only 18 when they became soldiers, and now they have to come back to civilian life.

At the beginning, even if Ernst is the narrator, we don't know much about him. Most of the story is about what happens to his comrades, to the company of men he is with, they are a community. But this stops when they come back from the war and need to adapt to their civilian lives. They lose touch and they become different people, so that even they cannot understand each other.

It's a beautiful book, beautifully written (something that already fascinated me from his first novel), and it's a pity that this translation is not very good (or that's my feeling). But it's very tough to read sometimes, the accounts of what happened in the war, or the despair of some former soldiers, who see that they are no longer fit for "normal" life, they cannot adapt to society, that war has killed them in some other cruel way. It is also a very interesting portrait of German society after the war and it gives an intuition of what happened later.

Anyway, great book, the best I've read this year so far. It's not required to have read All Quiet on the Western Front to understand it!

Kristina says

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Tracey says

This is the sequel to All Quiet on the Western Front. If you have read that I recommend that you be sure to read this. The two go hand in hand.

The story begins in Flanders with men still fighting and dying and being maimed, whilst the talk of peace ripples along the front line with a mixture of hope and disbelief.

Those who 'survive' slowly make their way home only to discover that nothing is as they remember because they themselves have been forever changed by the horrors of war.

There is a real insight into the both the PTSD and the state of Germany as it collapses in the aftermath. I learned a lot of this time period from one who was there.

The author's writing at times is sharp and jarring, and at others flows like pure water; as if Remarque himself was slipping between the hallucinatory world of the war and what it had done to him, and the romantic,

idealistic educated young man he once was, as he wrote of these young comrades home from one hell into another kind of hell.

There were many parts of this book where I just wanted to weep at the psychological damage done to these men and the walking wounded of a returned generation.

Many scenes stand out in my mind but one in particular, a scene from later in the book: a march of returned soldiers who have come home only to find poverty, penury, and a world no longer valuing them or the sacrifice they made. At the front of the march are men with one arm missing carrying the banners. Then comes the blind with eyes shot out. Then those who have a little sight but their faces are damaged and many have deformed or no jaws/mouth, noses. Next comes those who had 1 leg amputated shuffling along on crutches, followed by those with both legs lost, pushed along in wicker wheeled chairs. And finally, men who are just a mere torso pushed along on trolleys like the type used to move carcasses of meat in an abattoir.

'awful misery, without much hope, prisoners of the destiny that others made for them.'

The journal I keep of quotes from books I read is full of wisdom and truth when writing from this book.

" We were making war against ourselves without knowing it! Every shot that struck home, struck one of us."

"The youth of the world rose up in every land, believing that it was fighting for freedom. And in every land, they were duped and misused."

This is a book I would like a copy of to keep on my bookshelf and hope others will read.

'all learning, all culture, all science is nothing but hideous mockery, so long as mankind makes war in the name of God and humanity with gas, iron, explosive and fire.' We need to remember and learn from the testimony of these fallen, or suffer it all over again.

Sam Reaves says

Outside Germany, everyone knows Remarque's All Quiet on the Western Front, but few people are aware of his other novels, which is a pity, because some of them are terrific, particularly those set in the turbulent Germany of the twenties. Remarque continued to write until his death in 1970, his novels reflecting an active life that saw him leave Germany in the thirties and live in exile, eventually settling in New York and becoming a U.S. citizen.

The Road Back is a sequel to All Quiet, depicting the return of the surviving characters from that book to their home town in a defeated and chaotic Germany. While the political turmoil that would lead to the rise of the Nazis forms the background, the novel is mainly concerned with the devastating effect of war on young lives. As they struggle to resume disrupted careers and find a place in a society that is blind and deaf to their sacrifices, the trench war survivors become increasingly embittered as others prosper. Despair, suicide and murder lie in wait.

The trauma, disillusionment and alienation of combat veterans barely out of their teens are sadly still familiar to us a hundred years later. They didn't call it PTSD in Germany in 1919, but as Remarque shows, they had it.

classic reverie says

When I heard that "All Quiet on the Western Front" (AQOTWF) was the beginning of a trilogy last year even before reading this well known story, I wanted to read all three in a row. My reading plan for 2018 has several series that are on my list. Having read AQOTWF, I was wondering how Remarque would handle the next two books especially given the ending of the first, but as Frances Hodgson Burnett talked about how she expanded on her short story which blossomed into "A Little Princess" by character becoming known which were in the first but some mentioned others did not tap Remarque on the shoulder until his second story. Having lived in these times, Remarque brings something more poignant and resounding because this was historical fiction which so much reality. You can see the mistakes of the future coming because we know them but living it as he did he saw and experienced it, it is wonderful when modern writers can bring forth a great historical fiction novel but I get chills when I read books from the past especially when they are writing of events of their times. I was loving this sad and hopeful story but it became an ultimate favorite when 3/4 or more into the novel, my heart broke and I cried. When a book gets me to cry it is something grand because I am not one to cry at anything unless it really touches my core. Can these soldiers find peace after the war is over or is the war inside them forever? My last couple highlights are worth the look see, I attempted to submit to Good reads but they would not take but are in my highlights section. I will read book three next, Three Comrades.

Jimmy Fahey says

I read Remarque's All Quiet on the Western Front many years ago. I re-read it while travelling through Europe and wanted to read more of his novels. I heard about the Road Back in an article about Kevin Power's brilliant Yellow Birds, a novel about the Gulf War.

There are a lot of novels about the First World War, but very few books about the experience of returning soldiers. The Road Back poignantly captures the difficult task returned soldiers face of reintegrating into society after years of war. Many of the characters in the novel went to war during the later stages of their formative years and know very little of the life outside of the trenches. Moreover, the main character attempts to capture his lost youth by taking a trip to the country but all he can think of is ideal locations for a machine gun placement. He drifts aimlessly and struggles to find a place in society, failing as a school teacher and returning to his parents house.

The society they return to also struggles to accommodate them, even though they have sacrificed so much for the supposed greater good of their country. I've read that this is a problem faced by many of our own returned servicemen from equally futile wars (Iraq and Afghanistan).

In 2014 we will commemorate the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War. I know in my own country, Australia, the senseless slaughter has been replaced with a chest-thumping jingoism. I think this is ultimately dangerous and perhaps these fanatics who 'pilgrimage' to Gallipoli should read Remarque, Graves, Owen, Sassoon, Barbuessie and realise that there was nothing noble or glorious about the pointless slaughter of the First World War.

Elie F says

This novel is the sequel to Remarque's most famous All Quiet on the Western Front. It is a collective portrait

of the returning soldiers from the Great War who failed to reckon with the make-believe peace that followed. The experience at the front shattered them from the rest of the world. *This is no longer our world; the trenches ousted it.* The loss of comradeship, mostly due to the divisive force of revolution, also featured as a major source of despair. Things were simpler at the front where comrades marched together, noble and good. *A nice mess we have made of it.*

I expected to gain more historical information about post-war Germany from this novel which it didn't offer, but still a traumatizingly superb read.

Rizwan says

Another Remarque classic, another one of the Greatest novel I've read. This is THE ABSOLUTE PERFECT followup there can be to the epical greatness of the story of All Quiet on the Western Front. A must read for anyone who ever heard of World War 1/2, or ever had a friend, or just ever read even a single book!

Ettore1207 says

L'ho riletto dopo tanti anni, in una nuova traduzione. Mi piacque molto allora, mi è piaciuto molto oggi. Sempre una gran lettura, Remarque non tradisce.

È giorno. Entro in classe. I piccoli sono lì seduti, a mani giunte. Nei loro occhioni c'è ancora tutto il timido stupore degli anni infantili. Mi guardano tanto fiduciosi, con tanta devozione, che mi provocano un colpo al cuore.

Eccomi davanti a voi, uno dei centomila falliti ai quali la guerra ha infranto ogni fede e quasi ogni energia... Sono davanti a voi e mi rendo conto di quanto siete più vivi e più legati alla vita. Sono davanti a voi e dovrei esservi maestro e guida. Ma che cosa vi devo insegnare? Devo dirvi che fra vent'anni sarete inariditi e mutilati, atrofizzati nei vostri istinti più spontanei, ridotti senza pietà a merce avariata? Devo spiegarvi che tutta la cultura, tutta la civiltà, tutta la scienza non sono che uno scherno orrendo fintanto che ci sono uomini che si fanno la guerra col gas e col ferro, con la polvere e col fuoco, in nome di Dio e dell'umanità? Che cosa devo insegnarvi, piccole creature, a voi, le uniche che siete rimaste pure in questi anni terribili?

Lora Grigorova says

The Road Back: <http://readwithstyle.wordpress.com/20...>

I am quite astonished that The Road Back is much less known than its famous prequel All Quiet on the Western Front. For me The Road Back is a heartbreaking story, that left me crying myself quietly to sleep in the middle of the night. In All Quiet on the Western Front Erich Maria Remarque was not quite himself – the author I know for dissecting human relationships and for philosophizing about life and love. Instead he was focused exclusively on the grotesqueness, violence and fatuity of war that leaves young men physically and emotionally crippled.

In The Road Back Erich Maria Remarque is again the author I fell in love with. The story begins during the last few days of WWI, a short time after All Quiet on the Western Front ended. Although it doesn't feature the same characters (with the exception of Tjaden) in The Road Back many of the soldiers from All Quiet on the Western Front are mentioned...but they are already dead.

Read more: <http://readwithstyle.wordpress.com/20...>

c?ng r?m says

??c m?t h?i sao th?y quen quen, ??c thim h?i n?a nh? ra là gi?ng dead poets society ?ó, à hông, ch?c phim ?ó gi?ng truy?n này m?i ph?i, mà phim ?ó sao ha, mình c?ng không nh? n?a =)))
th?c ra b?n remarque t?i nh? b? b?nh r?c múi tiu... (r?c th? ph?m)... su?t ngày ba ch?m trìn min quá xì tin nên ??c zô c?ng h?i h?i m?t =))) nh?ng toi là túp r?t d? bias r?t d? m?i lòng mà :)) cho nên sau khi m?t thì chuy?n sang shúc ??ng eheheh T_T
pi ét: b?n Ludwig thi?u niên ?ã làm tui r?m r?m, không ph?i lúc b?n ?y ch?t ?âu, mà là m?t ngày tuy?t v?ng, b?n ?y xanh xao g?y gò ??ng d?a vào c?u thang... (r?c múi tiêu cho nó deep coi)
ò, th?ng ngh? m?t tr?m n?m sau tôi v?n mu?n sinh ra trên ??i làm bà tiên, ??n t?ng cho t?t c? thi?u niên ngày x?a m?t ?i?u ??c :D

Antje says

Es ist für mich das bisher am schwersten verdauliche Buch Remarques.

Erneut habe ich dutzende Passagen unterstrichen und für mich kommentiert, in denen meines Erachtens Wahrheit und Tiefgang stecken. Remarque leiht den zurückgekommenen Soldaten, die als Jugendliche in den Krieg gezogen sind, seine Stimme und konfrontiert die verantwortlichen Stellen mit deren verlorenen Jugend, ihrer unerträglichen Gegenwart und einer scheinbar hoffnungslosen Zukunft.

Remarque weiß wovon er schreibt, war er schließlich selbst mit 18 Jahren in den Krieg eingezogen und Zeuge des Tötens auf oberem Befehl für das Vaterland und die anschließende Rückkehr zum alltäglichen Leben oder besser, der Versuch in einen Alltag zurückzufinden, der nach den Fronterlebnissen keinen Sinn mehr macht. Familie, Nachbarn, Lehrer verstehen nicht den Zustand, in dem sich die Rückkehrer befinden und der sie quält ("Es ist alles umsonst, Ernst. Wir sind kaputt, aber die Welt geht weiter, als wenn der Krieg nicht da gewesen wäre.").

Umsonst warten die jungen Männer auf die versöhnlichen Worte: "Wir haben alle furchtbar geirrt! Wir wollen gemeinsam zurückfinden! Habt Mut!" Stattdessen sehen sie sich mit den Erwartungen konfrontiert, alles zu vergessen, geregelte Arbeit zu finden und sich wieder der staatlichen Ordnung anzupassen. Dies wird besonders in der Gerichtsverhandlung deutlich. Albert hat den Geliebten seiner Freundin erschossen. Seine Freunde klagen die Obrigkeit an! - Eine der ganz großen Szenen für mich!

Der erste ergreifende Augenblick war für mich jedoch die Passage, in der Ernst zu seiner Familie zurückkehrt und einen Moment mit seiner Mutter allein im Treppenhaus steht:

"Sie beugt sich über das Geländer. Ihr kleines zerfurchtes Gesicht ist golden beschattet vom Lampenschirm. Unwirklich wehen die Schatten und Lichter hinter ihr über den Flur. Und plötzlich schwankt etwas in mir, eine seltsame Rührung packt mich, fast wie ein Schmerz - als gäbe es nichts auf der Welt als dieses Gesicht, als wäre ich wieder ein Kind, dem man auf der Treppe leuchten muss, ein Junge, dem auf der Straße etwas geschehen kann, und alles andere dazwischen nur Spuk und Traum. -

Aber das Licht der Lampe fängt sich zu einem scharfen Reflex in meinem Koppelschloss. Die Sekunde verfliegt, ich bin kein Kind, ich trage eine Uniform. Rasch springe ich die Treppe hinunter, immer drei Stufen auf einmal, und stoße die Haustür auf, begierig, zu meinen Kameraden zu kommen."

In jeder Szene steckt ein hohes Maß an Bewegung, sei es äußerlich oder nur innerlich. Remarque gibt dem

Leser keine Ruhe, schont ihn nicht, sondern zieht ihn durch das Gefühlschaos seiner Protagonisten mit. So schildert er die Freitode von Ludwig und Georg detailliert. Allerdings in einer poetischen, beeindruckend ästhetischen Art. Er beraubt sie grausam ihres jungen Lebens und bettet sie sanft. Hier greift sie wieder, seine gewohnt schnörkellose Sprache, die gewaltige Bilder vor unseren Augen entstehen lässt, das Innere aufwühlt, ja ergreift und eine Wahrheit herauskatapultiert, die so groß und komplex ist, dass es mich nicht wundert, dass der Roman 1931 wie eine Bombe auf deutschen Boden schlug und heftig kritisiert wurde. Wie es Remarque so trefflich in einer Freitodszene formuliert "Das Schweigen beginnt zu reden." -

Es ist ein wichtiges Buch und die notwendige wie gelungene Fortsetzung von "Im Westen nichts Neues". Schade, dass dies damals von der Mehrheit der deutschen Bevölkerung nicht wahrgenommen und erkannt wurde, verbirgt Remarque in seinen Text sogar eine Begebenheit, die geradezu prophetisch ist. Während Ernst und seine Kameraden vor einem Waldstück sitzen, durchstößt plötzlich eine Gruppe minderjähriger Jungen das Gebüsch und übt Krieg, angeleitet von einem Erwachsenen, den er wiederholt als "Führer" betitelt.

Ich ziehe erneut meinen Hut vor diesen großartigen Schriftsteller.

Rick Slane says

This was the volume that followed All Quiet on the Western Front. The German soldiers were not victorious. Look for similarities with American soldiers returning home from Viet Nam.

Maxine says

The Road back, although less well known than All Quiet on the Western Front, is just as thought-provoking and, in subtle ways, even more heart breaking.

The story begins during the last few days of WWI. As battle rages around them, a group of young German soldiers contemplate what peace will be like and dream of returning home with both fear and longing. They grieve for lost comrades who won't be returning with them but anticipate the joy of being back with friends and family, of returning, finally, to their old lives.

When peace finally does arrive, they head home anticipating a hero's welcome; instead, they are met with indifference and lack of understanding. The people who had remained behind while they were off fighting for the Fatherland, have continued their lives without them and, for these people, peace is not much different from war - everything is pretty much the same. But these young men have changed. When they marched away to war, they were just boys, hardly more than children, with all the hopes and innocent dreams of youth; they have returned as men, old before their time, damaged physically and psychically and they no longer fit into this civilized world.

Nothing is the same for them and they feel lost and betrayed. Wives have taken lovers, jobs, once promised, are now occupied by others who hadn't left, they are too old and too restless to return easily to their studies, and they no longer respect those who once held authority over them - parents, teachers, police. They are scorned by the profiteers who became rich off the war and they have been forgotten by the girls they left behind. They suffer from shell-shock and depression and can't shake habits they developed for survival in the trenches. They steal to eat even though food is available, they have flash backs and jump at every loud noise, and their nights are plagued with nightmares.

One reenlists, hoping to regain the companionship they had shared during the war only to discover it doesn't exist in a peacetime army. One seeks to change the world through revolution only to be shot and killed by soldiers whom he once fought alongside. For some, the only solution is suicide and, for a very few, including Ernst, the narrator of the story, true peace is finally found in nature.

The Road back is possibly the hardest, most gut-wrenching book I have ever read. Remarque's characters are so vividly drawn that they seem to live in the pages and it is impossible not to feel every lost hope, every disappointment, every pain, every betrayal that they feel. This book is a must read for anyone whether pro- or anti-war, who wants to understand what it is to be a soldier during wartime.
