



MODERN PROBLEMS IN EDUCATION AND THEIR SCIENTIFIC  
SOLUTIONS

REMARQUE'S ANTI-WAR THEMES

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**Abstract:** *Remarque's anti-war themes led to his condemnation by [Nazi](#) propaganda minister [Joseph Goebbels](#) as "unpatriotic". He was able to use his literary success and fame to relocate to Switzerland as a refugee, and to the United States, where he became a [naturalized citizen](#).*

**Key words:** *anti-war themes, wartime, the postwar, emotive language*

During World War I, Remarque was [conscripted](#) into the [Imperial German Army](#) at the age of 18. On 12 June 1917, he was transferred to the [Western Front](#), 2nd Company, Reserves, Field Depot of the [2nd Guards Reserve Division](#) at [Hem-Lenglet](#). On 26 June 1917 he was posted to the 15th Reserve Infantry Regiment, 2nd Company, Engineer Platoon Bethe, and fought in the trenches between [Torhout](#) and [Houthulst](#). On 31 July 1917 he was wounded by shell [shrapnel](#) in his left leg, right arm and neck, and after being medically evacuated from the field was repatriated to an army hospital in [Duisburg](#), where he recovered from his wounds. In October 1918, he was recalled to military service, but the war's [armistice](#) a month later put an end to his military career.

After the war he continued his teacher training and worked from 1 August 1919 as a primary-school teacher in [Lohne](#), at that time in the county of Lingen, now in the county of [Bentheim](#). From May 1920 he worked in [Klein Berssen](#) in the former County of [Hümmling](#), now [Emsland](#), and from August 1920 in [Nahne](#), which has been a part of Osnabrück since 1972. On 20 November 1920 he applied for leave of absence from teaching.

He worked at a number of different jobs in this phase of his life, including librarian, businessman, journalist, and editor. His first paid writing job was as a technical writer for the [Continental Rubber Company](#), a German tire manufacturer.

Remarque had made his first attempts at writing at the age of 16. Among them were essays, poems, and the beginnings of a novel that was finished later and published in 1920 as *The Dream Room* (*Die Traumbude*). Between 1923 and 1926 he also scripted a comic series, *Die Contibuben*, drawn by Hermann Schütz, published in the magazine *Echo Continental*, a publication by the rubber and tire company [Continental AG](#).

After coming back from the war, the atrocities of war along with his mother's death caused him a great deal of mental trauma and grief. In later years as a professional writer, he started using "Maria" as his middle name instead of "Paul", to commemorate his mother. When he published *All Quiet on the Western Front*, he had his surname reverted





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to an earlier spelling – from Remark to Remarque – to disassociate himself from his novel *Die Traumbude*.

In 1927, he published the novel [\*Station at the Horizon\*](#) (*Station am Horizont*). It was serialised in the sports journal *Sport im Bild* for which Remarque was working. (It was first published in book form in 1998.) *All Quiet on the Western Front* (*Im Westen nichts Neues*) (1929), his career-defining work, was also written in 1927. Remarque was at first unable to find a publisher for it. Its text described the experiences of German soldiers during World War I. On publication it became an international bestseller and a landmark work in twentieth-century literature. It inspired a new genre of veterans writing about conflict, and the commercial publication of a wide variety of war memoirs. It also inspired dramatic representations of the war in theatre and cinema, in Germany as well as in countries that had fought in the conflict against the [German Empire](#), particularly the United Kingdom and the United States.

Remarque in 1939. Riding on the tail of the success of *All Quiet on the Western Front*, a number of similar works followed from Remarque. In simple, emotive language, they described wartime and the postwar years in Germany. In 1931, after finishing [\*The Road Back\*](#) (*Der Weg zurück*), he bought a villa ([Casa Monte Tabor](#)) in [Ronco](#), Switzerland with the substantial financial wealth that his published works had brought him. He planned to live both there and in France.

On 10 May 1933, at the initiative of the [Nazi](#) propaganda minister [Joseph Goebbels](#), Remarque's writing was publicly declared as "unpatriotic" and was banned in Germany. Copies were removed from all libraries and restricted from being sold or published anywhere in the country.

Germany was rapidly descending into a totalitarian society, leading to mass arrests of elements of the population of which the new governing order disapproved. Remarque left Germany to live at his villa in Switzerland. His French background as well as his Catholic faith were also publicly attacked by the Nazis. They continued to decry his writings in his absence, proclaiming that anyone who would change the spelling of his name from the German "Remark" to the French "Remarque" could not be a true German. The Nazis further made the false claim that Remarque had not seen active service during World War I. In 1938, Remarque's German citizenship was revoked. In 1939, he and his ex-wife were remarried to prevent her repatriation to Germany. Just before the outbreak of [World War II](#) in Europe, they left [Porto Ronco](#), Switzerland, for the United States. They became [naturalised citizens](#) of the United States in 1947.

Remarque continued to write about the German experience after WWI. His next novel, [\*Three Comrades\*](#) (*Drei Kameraden*), focuses on life in [Weimar Republic](#) in the years of 1928 and 1929. His fourth novel, [Flotsam](#) (in German titled *Liebe deinen Nächsten*, or *Love Thy Neighbour*), first appeared in a serial version in English translation in *Collier's* magazine in 1939. He spent another year revising the text for its book publication in 1941, both in English and German. His next work, the novel [Arch of](#)





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*Triumph*, was first published in 1945 in English, and the next year in German as *Arc de Triomphe*. Another instant bestseller, it reached worldwide sales of nearly five million. His final novel was *Shadows in Paradise*. He wrote it while living at 320 East 57th Street in New York City. The apartment building "played a prominent role in his novel".

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