

History 342: Modern Germany (McCole)

**Reading and discussion questions for Omer Bartov,
“Savage War: German Warfare and Moral Choices in World War II”**

1. Bartov describes an older, prevalent view of the *Wehrmacht* (and particularly of its actions on the eastern front) that he is arguing against. What is that older view?
2. How does Bartov weigh the evidence on why the war in the east was so brutal and on the involvement of the *Wehrmacht* in that brutality?
3. Where does Bartov come down on the issue of the “uniqueness” of the Nazis’ genocide? (He is responding to a complex debate.) What does this issue have to do with the German army?
4. What were the relative roles of enforced discipline, comradeship, and ideological conviction in maintaining the commitment of rank and file soldiers and lower-ranking officers on the eastern front?
5. How does Bartov describe the postwar portrayal in film and literature of ordinary soldiers’ moral choices during the war? What is his own view on that issue?