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978-0-521-71541-6 - The Cambridge Companion to the Literature of World War II

Edited by Marina MacKay

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THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO THE LITERATURE  
OF WORLD WAR II

The literature of the Second World War has emerged as an accomplished, moving, and challenging body of work, produced by writers as different as Norman Mailer and Virginia Woolf, Primo Levi and Ernest Hemingway, Jean-Paul Sartre and W. H. Auden. This Companion provides a comprehensive overview of the international literatures of the war: both those works that recorded or reflected experiences of the war as it happened, and those that tried to make sense of it afterwards. It surveys the writing produced in the major combatant nations (Britain and the Commonwealth, the USA, Japan, Germany, France, Italy, and the USSR), and explores its common themes. This book aims to supply the new reader with the essential knowledge and conceptual tools for reading the literature of World War II. With its chronology and guide to further reading, it will be an invaluable source of information and inspiration for students and scholars of modern literature and war studies.

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WORLD WAR II

EDITED BY  
MARINA MACKAY  
*Washington University, St. Louis*



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DAGMAR BARNOUW taught intellectual and cultural history at the University of Southern California. Her American publications include *Weimar Intellectuals and the Threat of Modernity* (1988); *Visible Spaces: Hannah Arendt and the German-Jewish Experience* (1990); *Critical Realism* (1994); *Germany 1945: Views of War and Violence* (1997); *Naipaul's Strangers* (2003); and *The War in the Empty Air: Victims, Perpetrators, and Postwar Germans* (2005).

DONNA COATES is Associate Professor of English at the University of Calgary, where she teaches Australian and Canadian literatures, with an emphasis on women's war fiction and drama. She has published articles and book chapters on women's literary responses to the world wars and the Vietnam War. Her *Canada and the Theatre of War* (with Sherrill Grace) is forthcoming in 2008.

JAMES DAWES teaches American and Comparative Literature at Macalester College. He is the author of *That The World May Know: Bearing Witness to Atrocity* (2007) and *The Language of War* (2002) as well as numerous articles on topics including literary and language theory, international law and human rights, trauma, literature and medical studies, Shakespeare, aesthetic theory, and pedagogical technique.

ROBERT S. C. GORDON is Reader in Modern Italian Culture at the University of Cambridge. His books include *Primo Levi's Ordinary Virtues: From Testimony to Ethics* (2001), *An Introduction to Twentieth-Century Italian Literature: A Difficult Modernity* (2005), and (as co-editor) *Culture, Censorship and the State in Twentieth-Century Italy* (2005).

KATHARINE HODGSON is Senior Lecturer in Russian at the University of Exeter. She is the author of *Written with the Bayonet: Soviet Russian Poetry of World War Two* (1996), and of a monograph about Olga Berggolts, best known as the poet of the wartime siege of Leningrad.

PHYLLIS LASSNER teaches Holocaust Studies, Gender Studies, and Writing at Northwestern University. She is the author of two books on Elizabeth Bowen as

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well as of *British Women Writers of World War II* (1998), *Colonial Strangers: Women Writing the End of the British Empire* (2004), and many articles on interwar and wartime women writers. She has also published essays on Holocaust writing and her most recent book is *Anglo-Jewish Women Writing the Holocaust: Displaced Witnesses* (2008).

MARINA MACKAY teaches twentieth-century British writing at Washington University in St. Louis. She is the author of *Modernism and World War II* (2007) and editor (with Lyndsey Stonebridge) of *British Fiction After Modernism* (2007).

LEO GWILYM MELLOR is a Fellow of New Hall and a Newton Trust Lecturer at the University of Cambridge. He has written on Second World War literature, contemporary poetry, and Anglo-Welsh culture. His own poems have been published as *Marsh Fear/Fen Tiger* (2002) and *Things Settle* (2004). A book from his travels among the Welsh-speaking communities of Patagonia will appear in 2008. He is currently writing about the flowers of London's bombsites.

ROD MENGHAM is Reader in Modern English Literature at the University of Cambridge, where he is also Curator of Works of Art at Jesus College. He is the author of books on Charles Dickens, Emily Brontë, and Henry Green, as well as of *The Descent of Language* (1993). He has edited collections of essays on contemporary fiction, violence and avant-garde art, and the fiction of the 1940s. He is also editor of the *Equipe* series of poetry pamphlets, co-editor and co-translator of *Altered State: The New Polish Poetry* (2003), and co-editor of *Vanishing Points: New Modernist Poems* (2005). His most recent books are a dual-language *Selected Poems*, in English with Polish translations (2007), and, with Sophie Gilmartin, *Thomas Hardy's Shorter Fiction* (2007).

MARGOT NORRIS is Chancellor's Professor of English and Comparative Literature at the University of California, Irvine, where she teaches modern literature. She is the author of *Writing War in the Twentieth Century* (2000). She also has four books on James Joyce in print, as well as a study of the animal and anthropomorphism in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century intellectual history, *Beasts of the Modern Imagination* (1985).

ADAM PIETTE is Professor at the University of Sheffield. He is the author of *Remembering and the Sound of Words: Mallarmé, Proust, Joyce, Beckett* (1996) and *Imagination at War: British Fiction and Poetry, 1939–1945* (1995), is working on a monograph on Cold War writing and a book on close reading based on a series published in *The Reader*, and is also editing a companion to war writing.

GILL PLAIN is Professor of English Literature and Popular Culture at the University of St. Andrews. Her publications include *Women's Fiction of the Second World War: Gender, Power and Resistance* (1996), *Twentieth-Century Crime Fiction:*

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*Gender, Sexuality and the Body* (2001), and *John Mills and British Cinema: Masculinity, Identity and Nation* (2006). She is currently working on a literary history of the 1940s.

PETRA RAU is Senior Lecturer in English and European Literature at the University of Portsmouth. She has published articles on fascist tourism, on contemporary and modernist war writing, and on the poetics of Freud's case studies. Her monograph *English Modernism, National Identity and the Germans, 1890–1950* is forthcoming.

DEBARATI SANYAL is Associate Professor of French at the University of California, Berkeley. She is the author of *The Violence of Modernity: Baudelaire, Irony, and the Politics of Form* (2006) and articles on Baudelaire, Holocaust studies, and French postwar commitment. She is currently writing a book on converging memories of the Occupation, the Shoah, and colonialism in postwar France.

LYNDSEY STONEBRIDGE is Professor of Literature and Critical Theory at the University of East Anglia, Norwich. She is the author of *The Writing of Anxiety: Imagining Wartime in Mid-Century British Culture* (2007) and *The Destructive Element: British Psychoanalysis and Modernism* (1998), and the editor (with Marina MacKay) of *British Fiction After Modernism* (2007) and (with John Phillips) of *Reading Melanie Klein* (1998). She is currently completing a book on writing about war-crime trials (*Law Writing: Fiction After Nuremberg*).

REIKO TACHIBANA is Associate Professor of Comparative Literature and Japanese at The Pennsylvania State University. Her research interests include East–West relations, contemporary Japanese fiction and culture, and transnational/diasporic writers of Japan. She is the author of *Narrative as Counter-Memory: A Half-Century of Postwar Writing in Germany and Japan* (1998) and is currently completing a book about transnational women writers of Japan.



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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Warmest thanks are due to Ray Ryan at Cambridge University Press. This book was his idea, and at every stage he advanced the project with characteristic generosity and energy. Anna Zaranko copyedited the manuscript for the Press with insight as well as rigor. It is also a pleasure to acknowledge at least one of my debts to my friend and colleague Vincent Sherry, from whose work I have benefited all along. And to thank Dan Grausam for his indispensable contributions, intellectual and musical, to home-front morale.

The contributors to this volume have been a pleasure to work with, and I thank them sincerely for their patience, efficiency, and good will. Sadly Dagmar Barnouw did not live to see the project completed, and the death of this unshakably principled, passionate, and humane scholar is a loss to all of us who study the war and its aftermath.

MMK

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## CHRONOLOGY

- 1918 World War I Armistice  
Murder of Tsar Nicholas II and family  
Siegfried Sassoon, *Counter-Attack*  
Oswald Spengler, *The Decline of the West*  
Rebecca West, *The Return of the Soldier*
- 1919 Paris Peace Conference opens  
League of Nations formed  
Amritsar massacre  
John Maynard Keynes, *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*
- 1921 Wilfred Owen, *Poems*
- 1922 Mussolini's march on Rome  
Irish Civil War  
E. E. Cummings, *The Enormous Room*  
T. S. Eliot, *The Waste Land*  
James Joyce, *Ulysses*  
Virginia Woolf, *Jacob's Room*
- 1923 Nazi coup ("Beer Hall Putsch") fails  
Jaroslav Hašek, *The Good Soldier Švejk*
- 1924 Death of Lenin; rise of Stalin
- 1925 Locarno Treaties reaffirm European peace  
Sergei Eisenstein, *Battleship Potemkin*  
F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby*  
Hitler, *Mein Kampf*  
Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*

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## CHRONOLOGY

- 1926 General Strike  
Hirohito enthroned Emperor of Japan
- 1928 Kellogg–Briand Pact outlaws war as instrument of national policy  
British women fully enfranchised  
Edmund Blunden, *Undertones of War*  
Ford Madox Ford, *Parade's End* (tetralogy completed)  
Radclyffe Hall, *The Well of Loneliness*  
D. H. Lawrence, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*  
Robert Sherriff, *Journey's End*
- 1929 Wall Street Crash  
Richard Aldington, *Death of a Hero*  
Robert Graves, *Good-bye to All That*  
Ernest Hemingway, *A Farewell to Arms*  
Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front*
- 1930 Haile Selassie crowned Emperor of Ethiopia
- 1931 Statute of Westminster establishes equality of self-governing dominions
- 1932 Salazar establishes fascist regime in Portugal  
Nazis become largest party in Reichstag  
Roosevelt wins landslide presidential election  
British Union of Fascists founded  
W. H. Auden, *The Orators*  
Louis-Ferdinand Céline, *Journey to the End of the Night*  
Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World*
- 1933 Hitler becomes German Chancellor  
Gestapo and first Nazi concentration camp (Dachau) established  
Germany and Japan withdraw from League of Nations  
Roosevelt's "New Deal"  
Vera Brittain, *Testament of Youth*  
H. G. Wells, *The Shape of Things to Come*
- 1934 Austrian Civil War  
Japan invades Manchuria  
Nazi purge ("Night of the Long Knives")
- 1935 Italy invades Abyssinia  
Hitler announces rearmament  
Nuremberg Laws

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- 1936 Berlin Olympics  
Spanish Civil War starts  
Germany remilitarizes Rhineland  
Rome–Berlin Axis formed  
Soviet show trials begin
- 1937 Chamberlain elected Prime Minister  
Italy leaves League of Nations  
Nanking Massacre  
Picasso, *Guernica*  
David Jones, *In Parenthesis*
- 1938 12 March: Germany annexes Austria (“*Anschluss*”)  
29–30 September: Munich Agreement partitions Czechoslovakia;  
Chamberlain promises “peace for our time”  
9–10 November: *Kristallnacht* pogrom  
George Orwell, *Homage to Catalonia*  
Virginia Woolf, *Three Guineas*
- 1939 15 March: Germans march into Prague  
1 April: Fascists win Spanish Civil War  
7 April: Italy invades Albania  
23 August: Nazi–Soviet non-aggression pact  
1 September: Germany invades Poland  
3 September: Britain and France declare war on Germany  
17 September: USSR invades Poland  
30 November: USSR invades Finland  
17 December: *Admiral Graf Spee* scuttled
- Cyril Connolly founds *Horizon*  
W. H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood, *Journey to a War*  
Christopher Isherwood, *Goodbye to Berlin*
- 1940 9 April: Germany invades Denmark and Norway  
10 May: Germany invades France and the Low Countries  
10 May: Churchill becomes Prime Minister  
14 May: Netherlands surrender  
20 May: Germans reach English Channel  
27 May–4 June: BEF evacuated at Dunkirk  
28 May: Belgium surrenders  
10 June: Italy declares war on France and Britain

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- 14 June: Fall of Paris  
 22 June: French sign armistice  
 28 June: De Gaulle recognized as leader of Free French  
 3 July: Britain sinks French fleet  
 10 July–15 September: Battle of Britain  
 23 July: USSR annexes Baltic States  
 7 September: Blitz begins (until May 10, 1941)  
 27 September: Germany, Japan, and Italy sign Tripartite Pact  
 28 October: Italy invades Greece  
 11 November: RAF attacks Italian fleet at Taranto  
 November: Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia join Axis

*The Great Dictator*, dir. Charlie ChaplinErnest Hemingway, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*Arthur Koestler, *Darkness at Noon*

- 1941 6 January: Roosevelt's "Four Freedoms" speech  
 1 March: Bulgaria joins Axis  
 11 March: Lend-Lease Act  
 29 March: Battle of Cape Matapan  
 6 April: Germany invades Yugoslavia and Greece  
 6 April: Italy surrenders Ethiopia  
 13 April: Japan and USSR sign non-aggression pact  
 17 April: Yugoslavia surrenders  
 21 April: Greece surrenders  
 10 May: Hess undertakes unofficial peace mission  
 20 May: Germany invades Crete  
 24 May: German battleship *Bismarck* sinks *HMS Hood*  
 27 May: *Bismarck* sunk  
 22 June: Germany invades USSR  
 12 July: Anglo-Soviet Treaty of Mutual Assistance  
 14 August: Atlantic Charter outlines Anglo-American objectives  
 17 August: Fall of Kiev  
 4 September: Roosevelt authorizes naval "shoot on sight" policy  
 8 September: Siege of Leningrad begins (lifted January 27, 1944)  
 2 October: Final German offensive on Moscow begins  
 17 October: Tojo becomes Japanese Prime Minister  
 14 November: Germans sink *HMS Ark Royal*

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- 5 December: Britain declares war on Finland, Hungary, Romania  
 7 December: Japan attacks Pearl Harbor  
 8 December: USA declares war on Japan  
 8 December: Japan invades Malaya, Hong Kong, Thailand, Philippines  
 11 December: Germany declares war on USA  
 11 December: Japan invades Burma  
 22 December: Japanese take Manila  
 25 December: Hong Kong surrenders

Bertolt Brecht, *Mother Courage and Her Children*Virginia Woolf, *Between the Acts*

- 1942 11 January: Fall of Kuala Lumpur  
 20 January: Wannsee Conference formulates “final solution”  
 8 February: Fall of Rangoon  
 15 February: Fall of Singapore  
 19 February: Japanese–American internment authorized  
 19 February: Japanese bomb Darwin, Australia  
 22 February: US leaves Philippines  
 27–29 February: Battle of the Java Sea  
 2 March: Fall of Batavia  
 18 April: US bombs Tokyo  
 23 April: “Baedeker raids” on historic English cities begin  
 6–8 May: Battle of the Coral Sea  
 30 May: “1000 bomber raid” on Cologne  
 4 June: Heydrich assassinated  
 4–7 June: Battle of Midway  
 1–27 July: First Battle of El Alamein  
 7 August: Battle of Guadalcanal begins (ends February 1943)  
 19 August: Allied Dieppe Raid fails  
 13 August: Battle for Stalingrad begins (ends February 2, 1943)  
 23 October–4 November: Second Battle of El Alamein  
 11 November: Germans occupy Vichy France  
 31 December: Battle of the Barents Sea

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Manhattan Project established to build nuclear weapons

Beveridge Report outlines postwar British welfare state

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, *Flight to Arras**Casablanca*, dir. Michael Curtiz*In Which We Serve*, dir. Noel Coward and David Lean*Mrs. Miniver*, dir. William Wyler*Prelude to War*, dir. Frank Capra, first of seven “Why We Fight” films

1943	23 January:	Allies take Tripoli
	2–4 March:	Battle of the Bismarck Sea
	19 April–16 May:	Uprising and extinction of Warsaw Ghetto
	13 May:	German and Italian forces surrender in Tunisia
	16 May:	Dambuster raids
	10 July:	Allied invasion of Sicily
	24 July:	Hamburg firestorm
	25 July:	Mussolini deposed
	3 September:	Italy surrenders
	15 September:	Mussolini founds Salò Republic
	23 September:	Italy signs armistice with Allies
	6 November:	USSR retakes Kiev
	28 November–1 December:	Churchill, Roosevelt, and Stalin meet in Tehran

T. S. Eliot, *Four Quartets*Henry Green, *Caught*Graham Greene, *The Ministry of Fear**Fires Were Started*, dir. Humphrey Jennings*Five Graves to Cairo*, dir. Billy Wilder

1944	4 January–18 May:	Battle of Monte Cassino
	22 January:	US landings at Anzio
	22 February:	US takes Eniwetok
	4 June:	Fall of Rome
	6 June:	D-Day landings
	13 June:	Germans deploy V1 rocket against London
	9 July:	Allies take Caen
	20 July:	Assassination attempt against Hitler
	24 July:	Liberation of Majdanek
	1 August:	Warsaw Uprising (crushed October 2)

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23 August:	Romania surrenders
24 August:	Liberation of Paris
8 September:	German V2 rocket used against London
11 September:	Allied troops enter Germany
25 September:	Allies defeated at Arnhem
28 October:	Bulgaria signs armistice
16 December:	Germany begins Ardennes counteroffensive ("Battle of the Bulge")

Deaths of war poets Keith Douglas and Alun Lewis

1945	20 January:	Hungary signs armistice
	27 January:	Red Army liberates Auschwitz
	4–11 February:	Yalta Conference
	13–14 February:	Dresden firestorm
	19 February–16 March:	Battle of Iwo Jima
	9–10 March:	Tokyo firestorm
	April:	Liberation of Buchenwald, Bergen-Belsen, Dachau
	1 April–21 June:	Battle of Okinawa
	12 April:	Death of Roosevelt
	28 April:	Execution of Mussolini
	30 April:	Hitler commits suicide
	2 May:	Fall of Berlin
	7 May:	Germany signs unconditional surrender
	8 May:	V-E Day
	5 June:	Allied Control Council takes over Germany
	26 June:	UN Charter signed
	16 July:	Atomic bomb tested
	26 July:	Churchill loses election
	26 July:	Potsdam Declaration demands unconditional surrender of Japan
	6 August:	Atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima
	9 August:	Atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki
	15 August:	V-J Day
	2 September:	Japan signs instrument of surrender
	20 November:	Nuremberg Trials begin



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- George Orwell, *Animal Farm*  
 Karl Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*  
 Rome, *Open City*, dir. Roberto Rossellini
- 1946 Churchill's "Iron Curtain" speech  
 Japanese war crimes trials begin  
 Italy becomes a republic  
 H. D., *Trilogy*  
 Keith Douglas, *Alamein to Zem Zem*  
*The Best Years of Our Lives*, dir. William Wyler
- 1947 Truman Doctrine on Communist containment  
 European Recovery Program ("Marshall Plan")  
 Independence of India and Pakistan  
 Anne Frank's diary first published (in Dutch)  
 Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*  
 W. H. Auden, *The Age of Anxiety*  
 Italo Calvino, *The Path to the Nest of Spiders*  
 Albert Camus, *The Plague*  
 Primo Levi, *If This Is a Man*  
 Thomas Mann, *Dr. Faustus*
- 1948 State of Israel proclaimed  
 Berlin Airlift begins  
 Tojo executed  
 Elizabeth Bowen, *The Heat of the Day*  
 James Gould Cozzens, *Guard of Honor*  
 Norman Mailer, *The Naked and the Dead*  
 Ezra Pound, *The Pisan Cantos*
- 1949 NATO formed  
 Partition of Germany  
 People's Republic of China proclaimed  
 USSR tests atomic weapons  
 Audie Murphy, *To Hell and Back*  
 George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*  
 Jean-Paul Sartre, *The Roads to Freedom* (trilogy completed)  
*Sands of Iwo Jima*, dir. Allan Dwan
- 1950 Truman authorizes development of hydrogen bomb  
 Korean War begins  
*The God that Failed*, ed. Richard Crossman

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- 1951 Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*  
James Jones, *From Here to Eternity*  
Herman Wouk, *The Caine Mutiny*
- 1952 US detonates hydrogen bomb  
Pierre Boulle, *The Bridge over the River Kwai*  
Evelyn Waugh, *Men at Arms*
- 1953 Death of Stalin  
Eisenhower becomes president  
Rosenberg execution  
Samuel Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*  
Arthur Miller, *The Crucible*  
*From Here to Eternity*, dir. Fred Zinnemann  
*Stalag 17*, dir. Billy Wilder  
*The Desert Rats*, dir. Robert Wise
- 1954 Algerian War of Independence begins  
US Senate censures McCarthy  
William Golding, *Lord of the Flies*
- 1955 Warsaw Pact signed  
*The Dam Busters*, dir. Michael Anderson  
*Night and Fog*, dir. Alain Resnais
- 1956 Soviet troops crush Hungarian uprising  
Kruschev denounces Stalin's excesses  
Britain and France forced to withdraw military response to Egyptian nationalization of Suez Canal ("Suez Crisis")