



# Andre Gide and the Second World War: A Novelist's Occupation

*Jocelyn Van Tuyl*

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*The first complete study of Gide's neglected wartime writings.*

Arguably the most influential French writer of the early twentieth century, André Gide is a paradigmatic figure whose World War II writings offer an exemplary reflection of the challenges facing a leading writer in a time of national collapse. Tracing Gide's circuitous "intellectual itinerary" from the fall of France through the postwar purge, this book examines the ambiguous role of France's senior man of letters during the Second World War. The writer's intricate maneuverings offer privileged insights into three issues of broad significance: the relationship of literature and politics in France during World War II, the repressions and repositionings that continue to fuel controversy about the period, and the role of public intellectuals in times of national crisis.

With the exception of the early wartime *Journal*, Gide's publications during France's "dark years" have received little critical attention. This book scrutinizes the entire wartime oeuvre in depth, tracing the evolution of Gide's political views and, most importantly, reading the wartime texts against each other. It is the interplay among these texts that reveals the full complexity of Gide's political positionings and the rhetorical brilliance he deployed to redress his tarnished image.

"...[An] extremely well-researched and level-headed account of André Gide's war years and their reconfiguration after the Armistice ... van Tuyl is an excellent guide through a murky and ugly period." — *South Atlantic Review*

"...this is a provocative and well-written study." — *Times Literary Supplement*

"...[this] useful book presents an innovative analysis of the vagaries of Gide's meandering ... Gide makes use of his texts as vehicles for retouching his own image, and his case serves as a uniquely creative response to the problem of the intellectual faced with the destabilizing force of war." — *The French Review*

"Van Tuyl has assembled a wide range of well-researched and well-supported arguments that restore to its necessary breadth and depth the historical and ideological context of the period. The book is a clear, concise, and thorough treatment of Gide's activities around World War II and is a polished reference work that will be invaluable to scholars and students of Gide for years to come." — Walter Putnam, The University of New Mexico

"This is an extraordinary look into a man who alleged utter frankness but could only be as honest as his changing view of himself permitted." — Kenneth Krauss, author of *The Drama of Fallen France: Reading la Comédie sans Tickets*

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