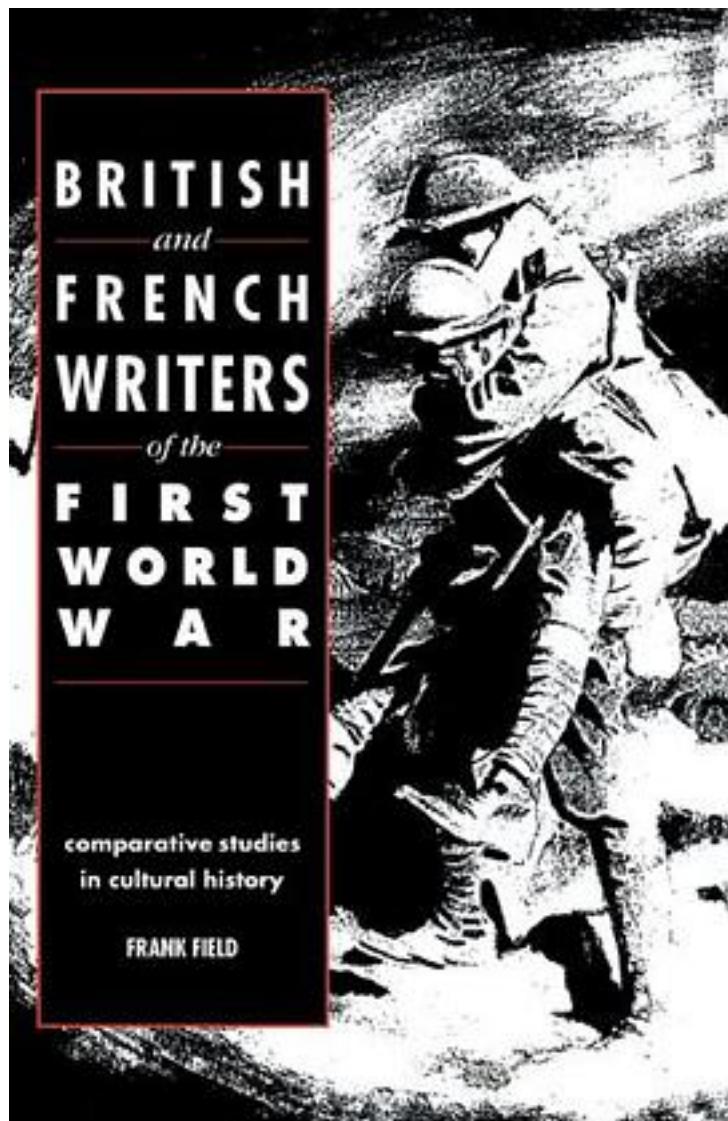


British and French Writers of the First World War



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The First World War dealt a profound shock to European society. In this original and stimulating book, the historian Frank Field looks at the experiences of France and Britain during the war years as revealed in the work of some of their most prominent writers responding to the unfolding catastrophe. Brooke, Wells, Shaw, Kipling, Lawrence, Owen and Rosenberg are set alongside Jaures, Barres, Maurras, Peguy, Psichari and Rolland, as case studies of the war's impact on intellectual life in their respective countries. The comparative perspective reveals deep differences between the French and the British experience, and yet a shared ordeal marked by the terrible ironies attendant on the shattering of common ideals. Literary images of war as a purification rite were effaced by the bloody realities of the conflict and the prophecies of writers who came to feel increasingly distanced from the essential innocence of the world before 1914 took on a new tone, grimly apocalyptic or bitterly disillusioned.

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