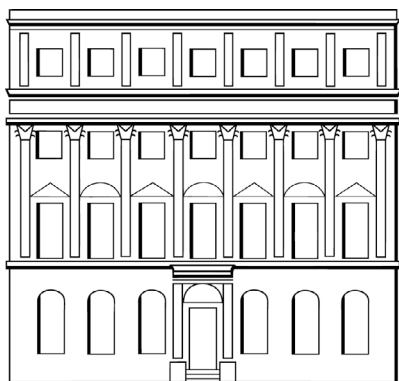


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THE 1981 ANNUAL LECTURE

1939 Revisited

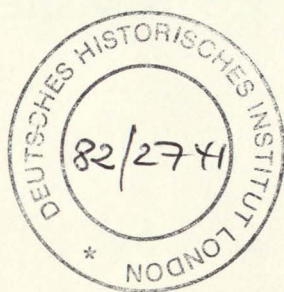
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A. J. P. TAYLOR

[1982]

A. J. P. Taylor is such a well-known personality that he does not require any introduction. We would simply like to refer to a recent bibliography of his works: A. J. P. Taylor. A Complete Annotated Bibliography and Guide to his Historical and Other Writings, ed. by Chris Wrigley, Harvester Press 1980.



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1939 Revisited

It is just twenty years since I published *The Origins of the Second World War*¹ and of course in many ways it is out of date. I welcome this opportunity of considering how it ought to be revised. Perhaps I can make my position clear by telling how it came into being at all. It was certainly not designed as a provocative book; indeed, I can say hand on heart that I have never written a book which was designed to be provocative. If other people choose to be provoked that is not my doing. *The Troublemakers*, which is my favourite brainchild, has something provocative in it, though not deliberately; my other books contain just what I discovered by looking at the sources.

The Origins of the Second World War has two origins itself. One is that I had written a large work, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918*², which went virtually up to the end of the First World War and I was interested in what happened thereafter. More than this, I had, since soon after the second war, read and reviewed the documents both of British and German foreign policy as they came out. In those days the editor of *The Manchester Guardian*, as it then was, was acutely interested in history, which is unusual for editors, and he gave me a whole page on each volume so that I really accumulated, quite by accident, a good deal of historical awareness. I had done a lot on the documents as they had come out. Now I could make a presentation of them. There was another reason, I was really engaged in another major project – my volume in the *Oxford History of England, English History 1914-45*³ – and then just at this time I became Vice-President of Magdalen College which is usually not a very onerous task, but this happened to be the quincentenary of the College and I had to run the whole thing. It was quite clear to me that for at least a year, and possibly two years, I should not have much time for research, so why not write a book where I had done the research already?

The Origins of the Second World War was a fill-up book. It would be wrong to say that it was not meant to be a serious contribution, but it was not meant to be an enormously long

contribution. I wrote it pretty fast and a good deal of it simply derives from my earlier generalisations and knowledge adding to this the sources as they had come out. And it seemed to me it came out as a reasonable picture.

Now that I look back at it I could tell you some of the defects. The major defect was that the sources which I used were grossly inadequate. Of the two great series, the German one was proceeding with some sort of organisation, but the British one was absolutely chaotic and grossly inadequate for a scientific publication⁴. For instance, it did not until much later in the day print any of the Minutes which are extremely valuable for the understanding of foreign affairs and had been a striking feature of the documents before 1914. Moreover, as we now know, it was steadily and consistently rigged in favour particularly of the then Foreign Secretary, I mean before the War, Lord Halifax. Curiously enough I did not get into trouble myself over this, but I landed someone else in trouble. When the first volume of the documents on British foreign policy came out I wrote a long review on the encouragement of the editor of the Times Literary Supplement, pointing out that they had not included the statement which Gooch and Temperley included in every volume, that they would feel themselves compelled to resign if there was any attempt to interfere with them⁵. It just had not occurred to the then editor that such a stance was required of an editor of diplomatic documents. I pointed out the absence of Minutes and in general concluded that it was an extremely inadequate volume. I then went away on holiday, to Yugoslavia as a matter of fact, where I could not be got hold of, and it was not possible for me to produce any defence or explanation. As a result Stanley Morrison, the then editor of the Times Literary Supplement, was so harassed by complaints, both from the editor, Woodward, himself and from the Foreign Office, that he decided to resign his post and that is how he ceased to be editor of the TLS. I have often brought great misfortunes on my editors and have escaped them myself. But certainly there was no intention on my part of making a provocation then; now, I think, everyone is agreed that the earlier volumes of the documents on British foreign policy are

highly inadequate and every detailed researcher now working in the archives finds flagrant suppressions and concealments.

Apart from that – some British documents, some German documents – I had nothing. The Italians, I think, had begun and done a couple of volumes on 1918, but they were of no significance⁶. The French had produced nothing at all and I had to make up a great deal from unreliable memoirs, or even from reliable memoirs; but there was certainly a great shortage. When I consider some of the things that have appeared later, not only in the diplomatic documents, but elsewhere, I appreciate how inevitable, no doubt, but unfortunate it was, that my book was so superficial and could have been reinforced.

I will give you a couple of examples, both in relation to British foreign policy. At this time, and until comparatively recently, our information came almost entirely from documents produced in the Foreign Office and this at a time when the Foreign Office had, I do not say nothing, but comparatively little to do with the great decisions in foreign affairs. It is only quite recently, about eight years, that we have learned anything extensively of the proceedings of either the Chiefs of Staff Committee or the Committee of Imperial Defence and here, for instance, we find, and it made me smile, the report of the Chiefs of Staff Committee each year, beginning from 1934, that of course the object of British defence policy must be to prepare for war with Germany⁷. When the scholars first discovered in German records that they had actually put it down, or Hitler had put it down, that they must prepare for a war against England and France, what a howl there was. But I have never heard a howl at the suggestion that the British Chiefs of Staff actually set it as their aim to prepare for war with Germany, because they called it defence; when other people do it, I have forgotten the word you call it, but is is not such a kind word as defence. But we knew absolutely nothing of this 15 to 20 years ago, at least I did not. The other thing which, I think, is more important and still leaves enormous gaps in our knowledge is the foreign policy pursued not by the Foreign Office, but by the

Bank of England, the Board of Trade and other economic organisations. We have only that splendid volume of Bernd-Jürgen Wendt which, unfortunately, he had to finish for all practical purposes in 1938, because the documents were not then available for 1939⁸. And here again, there is an entirely different story; just as the defence chiefs admitted preparing for a war against Germany, what one might call the economic branches of the British Government were steadily pursuing a policy not of appeasement, but of collaboration with Nazi Germany. This was to continue, as we know, though we do not know all the details, not only until March 1939 when the mission had to be called off, but was still being pursued in July 1939 and this may help to explain why Hitler, until very late in the day, did not take the British warnings seriously.

The whole pattern of British policy in the earlier 1930s was a strange contradiction: on the one side arguing that if Germany became really powerful an Anglo-German war was bound to take place and on the other side, seeking to build up an economic alliance, possibly just to develop the resources of Europe in combination. It was an earlier, though no doubt less reputable version of the Common Market and in those days Germany was the only country worth joining. The others were all shaky and broken down and the French, in any case, would not join. We know very little about it, but it is surely clear that it had its effect on Hitler's outlook, on the outlook of others in Germany and, what is more, it helps to explain the hesitations and oscillations of the British Government.

I did not have any of this and there again if I was to write my book again I would bring it in much more strongly. When I started I accepted all the then assumptions; for instance, one you will recognise now as pure myth, the overwhelming advance in armaments which Germany had accomplished, not only by 1939, but apparently as early as 1936. Living through that period influenced me, I suppose, quite as much as the post-war documents. And the impression that we had from 1936, or indeed earlier, was that Germany was fully equipped for war, that Great Britain was not equipped at all and that France was equipped only for a

defensive war. There was a period, just when my book was being completed, when there was dispute over this and one lot of economic pundits announced that Germany was not so advanced, others announced that Germany was even more advanced. My impression of this controversy, as it ran then and has since concluded, is that German armaments, if not a false alarm, were at any rate an exaggerated alarm. Moreover, we exaggerated the deliberation in Hitler's policy.

I have quite a long background in dealing with German, or Anglo-German affairs; I am not saying for a moment that my views were correct, obviously not all of them could have been, but it offended me very much and still offends me, when I read the critics of my book, who implied that I had been blind about the German danger before 1939 or that my only concern in 1960 /61 was to write a book apologising for German policies, that I was the worst kind of collaborator and appeaser⁹. My reply was twofold. My reply to English critics: I was making speeches about the German danger and how we must rearm from 1936 onwards, when all they were doing was sitting in the Common Room at All Souls College gossiping about politics after dinner; I never was joined by any of my colleagues in agitating for greater armament and urging the Labour Party, of which I was and amazingly still am a member, that we must. Right up to 1936 I was against rearmament in the sense of putting arms into the hands of the then, as it was ludicrously called, 'National' Government, because I believed and, to judge by the later behaviour of British governments, not altogether wrongly, that the 'National' Government if it got great armaments in its hands would use them to support Germany against Russia. By 1936, I do not say that I had decided this was an illusion, but I certainly thought that the situation was so serious that we had no option but to prepare for a war and abandon every other consideration. At any rate that was my view. I must be one of the very few people who actually addressed public meetings outside London against the Munich Settlement while it was being negotiated, and they were very tough meetings. They are the only meetings where I have had to sit

down before the end, because people were shouting so indignantly: 'you mean war', 'you want war', 'we don't want war', 'the Germans are right' – they were terrifying meetings. Not many people that I know of undertook meetings of this kind and I was offended and still am offended by people who imagine that I was interested in appeasing Hitler. I believed, among other things, that a stronger line would not only have been virtuous, to which I do not attach much importance, but that it would have arrested Hitler. It seems to me that all the evidence, and there is more and more, indicates that Hitler had quite clearly decided his policy in 1938, when he was pushed into the Czech affair and the policy, as he said himself, was that he would not go to war unless he was absolutely sure that France and England were going to keep out themselves. My reply to Americans is different; it is that it ill becomes citizens of a state which had to be kicked into war first by Japan and then by Germany, to criticise those who took a different line and were already at war. It never seems to have any effect. The one time when I felt my views really had been somewhat exaggerated was a splendid pamphlet by Harry Elmer Barnes, inventor of one of the greatest of modern political phrases, when he described the League of Nations and all the schemes for collective security as 'Perpetual war for the sake of perpetual peace', an outlook which I have always believed in. But in other ways I think he went a bit far in praising my book as 'blasting the historical blackout'¹⁰.

Now when I look back and reflect on the background of the outbreak of war in 1939 I see immediately one or two things I missed. It was when I was once more reading over the foolish argument about the blueprint that Hitler was supposed to have made of his plans; this we owe, incidentally, to the editors of the British documents. They discovered a very questionable document, so questionable indeed that it was not seriously used in the Nuremberg tribunal, a document which we now know had been manufactured for the Nuremberg tribunal and described in a solemn footnote as Hitler's Blueprint for the coming war¹¹. And as I reflected on this provocative phrase it occurred to me that, of course, I

ought to have written that Hitler had a clear blueprint, a blueprint which was provided by history and that was to overturn the peace settlement of 1919 and demolish its conditions one after another. I know that Hitler said quite early that merely to undo the Treaty of Versailles was a feeble, a petty ambition and that his ambitions were much greater. But I think it gave him a schedule. Hitler continued to follow the line which Stresemann had charted and which Brüning had followed. It was a great disappointment for him that reparations had already been ended. He went on to disarmament and so worked through the clauses of the Treaty up to the reoccupation of the Rhineland. It is very characteristic of Hitler's methods that his original intention was to reoccupy the Rhineland sometime in the spring of 1937. Then he saw a wonderful opportunity with the confusion arising over the Abyssinian question and speeded it all up in such a chaos that his generals, as we know, were greatly alarmed. I remember at the time, I was sure that immediately after the reoccupation of the Rhineland Hitler would move into Austria. On the contrary, he not only delayed this, but, in my opinion, was pushed into Austria before he was anxious to act. But still, the schedule is there and in this sense the last of what one might call his revisionist actions was, of course, the outbreak of war in September 1939 which arose, people sometimes say as a mere excuse, from the question of Danzig. I think one can see a pattern, that he was operating within the framework of revisionism, at any rate until 1939 and was then caught up in a situation where, for some time at any rate, he was prepared to make peace.

Looking back on this record how have my views changed? Primarily, as I have suggested, the attempts by the British to secure Anglo-German economic co-operation and then the way in which defence preparations became more and more the determining factor, we know this in regard to Hitler who often talked as though he would not be adequately prepared for war until 1943 and then felt that the other side would catch up on him. He was paying them a great compliment in doing so. The greatest flaw in my book, I can see as I look at it now. British policy was never able to concentrate on Ger-

many in the way that German policy could concentrate on the East or the West. Indeed, if you judge British policy from defence papers instead of Foreign Office papers (and to do either exclusively is a mistake) the Far East and the Japanese question were for the British a greater obsession and anxiety than Germany. British policy hoped somehow to push the German problem aside. It was to a great extent a dispute between the different services. There was not much mileage, or so the Admiralty thought, in Anglo-German naval conflict. The Admiralty before 1939 had the curious idea that they had solved the submarine menace. Whereas Japan represented an entirely new and ripening threat. One of the great misfortunes of recent historical studies is that Arthur Marder only completed the first half of his study of Japanese-British naval rivalry before his death¹². He intended to carry it to the end of the war and only reached the battle in the Malaya Sea. Here is a remarkable reminder that it was possible for the most distinguished naval historian of his day to write a book which was largely about British naval policy from 1936 to 1941 and hardly mention Germany at all. It was so secondary.

But when we look at the other services, particularly the Royal Air Force, then there is a different problem again. For the Royal Air Force British policy was a straightforward, simple competition in bomber planes, with the curious idea that the one that got ahead in bomber planes would decisively win the war. As to the army, it had two virulent rivals in this country, one called the Admiralty and the other called the Air Ministry. It was not in a position, at any rate before 1940, to contemplate a serious enemy at all. British defence policy did not wish to concentrate on Germany, but very often did so¹³.

When I come to 1939, I think we are still very short of material in some ways, and particularly for the Polish guarantee and all that followed from it. There has recently appeared a new book by Simon Newman on the guarantee to Poland which is a great deal more reliable in its presentation of British sources than mine was, though I think he carries his view too far¹⁴. I remember that when *The Origins*

came out, about the same time, there appeared a large book by a man called Hoggan, so denounced that although written in English, or at any rate in American, it never managed to find an English publisher¹⁵. I, glancing at it, felt that it was superficial and trivial and that it would be embarrassing to be linked with it, but now Newman has managed to do this. The new version presents us with a picture of Halifax as the man who organised the war and that it was Halifax who urged the guarantee to Poland, who did so in order to provoke a war. And, there are certainly many things which Halifax said which sound like it: "If I have to choose between a compromise with Hitler and a war, I would rather have war". I would put the explanation another way: Halifax was a trimmer, in other words, he always tried to dress the boat. When the boat was on the side of opposition to Hitler, he moved over the other way. When the boat was on the side of compromise, concession he moved the other way again. That is the only explanation I can give to you, but in any case it is delightful to think that an accepted picture in regard to the guarantee to Poland has been very much shaken.

Here is another confession, I think we are so short of material in regard to the attempts at an alliance between Soviet Russia and the Western Powers that I am not sure whether one should write anything about it at all. Most of my historical colleagues are so corrupted and blinded by their obsession with the Cold War that it is quite impossible for them to see clearly or to speak honestly about Soviet policies. It is fair to say that Soviet historians are also so blinded by the Cold War that one can make the same criticism of them.

We have more material from the British side than we had, but it is still baffling. For instance, the Chiefs of Staff unanimously reported that Great Britain would be much better off with a Soviet alliance than a Polish alliance and this opinion, repeatedly stated to the Cabinet, to the Prime Minister, to the Foreign Secretary, carried no weight whatsoever¹⁶. I do not attempt to understand this. Cold War is perhaps too strong a word, but if I put it as anti-Russian and still more anti-Bolshevik prejudice I think my criticism is correct. At any rate, alas, there is one source which I must

confess we shall not know in my lifetime and it may not even exist; we shall never know the pattern and the springs in Soviet policy. This makes things difficult, but it makes things more difficult if you start off with a prejudice against Soviet Russia.

There are two things that I missed out. I will be able to talk about one, but not the other. The only good point that Hugh Trevor-Roper made in his somewhat foolish criticism of my book was this. After the German occupation of Prague on March 15, 1939 the British Government, as we know, at first made complacent, cover-up remarks, principally provided naturally by Sir John Simon, but echoed by Neville Chamberlain with Halifax, as I said before, trimming the boat by taking a rather different line¹⁷. But what followed therefrom was a totally unexpected explosion of British public opinion. In 1938 over Munich British public opinion, especially the opinion of the House of Commons, was passionately, wildly, hysterically in favour of appeasement and regarded Chamberlain as one of the greatest statesmen of all time. Six months later the same public opinion, perhaps upset at its own enthusiasm for appeasement, turned with equally hysteric violence against the logical consequences of Munich. Anyone who was aware of the situation knew that sometime after Munich, not necessarily in six months, Czechoslovakia would lose its independence. I assumed in the autumn of 1938 that the unity of Czechoslovakia would be dissolved and that the Slovaks would use their position to get the autonomy or independence that they had wanted ever since 1918. I ought to have made more of the outcry.

Perhaps because I have taken part in explosions of public opinion, I find it very difficult to analyse them. You can record the reactions of individuals here and there, you can record something that is profoundly unreliable and yet inevitable as a source and that is the reactions of the House of Commons. I think it is carrying enthusiasm for democracy too far to imply that the House of Commons normally and naturally represents the majority feeling in the country. It may be that there is no majority feeling, it may be that when we talk about public opinion it means simply some editors

and journalists plus the members of the House of Commons, but certainly there was an explosion of public opinion in March 1939 and I ought to have gone into it more. I ought to have emphasised the difficulty that the British government worked under when it was trying to accomplish a new stroke of appeasement, because of the reaction of public opinion in March. I will add further, the explosion of opinion after the Nazi-Soviet pact in this country. The feeling that Great Britain should take a firm line was stronger in the House of Commons than elsewhere, but certainly I ought to have developed it.

I do not know how to handle public opinion; what historians have done in the past is to take the public opinion of a tiny group and call it British public opinion which was deeply stirred or not deeply stirred. Until the 20th century that was the best you could do, because the majority of people were unaware of what was happening. How many Anglo-Saxons do you suppose were deeply stirred by the Battle of Hastings, most of them did not hear about it for months afterwards and this applies to all our history until the 20th century with some modifications. To discover the sentiments of a nation was a very difficult thing to do, until recently. Now we know the sentiments of a nation, you turn on a knob, noise comes out and that is the sentiment of the nation, at least we are told that it is.

At any rate, these are some of the things which led me to an extraordinary ending of *The Origins*. English people assume that the Second World War started on 3rd September and I thought that was when my book had ended, but it had not, it ends with the Germans going into Danzig. Curtain. Now I think that is absolutely wrong, you cannot say that you have told the whole story with the German attack on Danzig and Poland in general. Surely you must explain how the others got in and so quite a number of books tend to go on to 3rd September. I am sure when I told the same story in *English History 1914-1945*¹⁸ I carried on the story to 3rd September.

But the more I reflected on this, the more I realised that I had given my book quite the wrong name. The Second World War did not begin on 1st September or even on 3rd

September. There was a small European war which involved only a decision over Poland and then a war which came to an end in June 1940. From June 1940 until June 1941 there was virtually no war in Europe. One can even go further and say that Europe was united for the only time in its history. Hitler's empire had been achieved with far less trouble than Napoleon's empire and was far more complete. There is an interesting subject which indeed people have worked on: the transformation of a European war into a world war¹⁹. Incidentally, I do not think we will be able to handle this theme in our lifetime, but I may be wrong. I may have got a bit too sensitive and too much aware of official interferences, but there is a theme called the abortive Anglo-German peace negotiations beginning in October 1939 and going on until when, I wonder, perhaps July 1940. If there was a change in British policy it came with the Battle of Britain and victory in the Battle of Britain which meant that Great Britain could go on with the war as long as she did not go on with it. I mean by that, as long as she kept out of Europe, which Great Britain successfully did until 1944. Whether there is material for this, the subject sometimes comes to the surface and maybe records will tell us – there is enough to make a story, but not enough to make a book, or not enough to arrive at conclusions. The most you can say is that the possibility of a negotiated peace with Germany was seriously contemplated by the War Cabinet in late May 1940 and continued to be pursued by some branches of the Foreign Office until July. Whether it completely faded thereafter who shall say; I would guess, yes.

But if we are going to tell the story of the origins of the Second World War there are two themes which I left out, one out of carelessness, coupled with ignorance and the other because I was perfectly aware of it, but saw the difficulties of presenting it. The Second World War had preliminaries of small wars, which started in 1931 and continued until June 1940, then there was virtually a period of peace. There was a little colonial war between England and Italy, but it was not of significance for the great course of the war. Two steps led to world war. The first was the German invasion of Russia.

We know exactly why it took place, though people invent extraordinary ideas that Hitler was short of raw materials and apprehensive of the Russian danger. Hitler like so many others had been deceived by success. His argument to the German generals was that it would be much easier to defeat Russia than it had been to defeat France. 'I have got a big army hanging around, they are getting bored, they must be used and it will clear up the European situation if we knock Russia out'. Here again, there came a first murmur of the negotiated peace idea : with Russia out of the war Great Britain who could not do anything against Germany would be ready for a negotiated peace. We have good materials on this. I think it needs to be amalgamated into the general story of the war and there is this great significance in it. The Russian war was without the slightest doubt the solitary decision of Hitler. The earlier decisions developed from the general situation in which Hitler was only one of the contributing factors.

The second war, of course, which has been worked on much more by American scholars than by Europeans was the war in the Far East which, having contributed difficulties to British foreign policy ever since 1939, flared up in 1941²⁰. But the last point which I have to make is the reminder that the war in the Far East, Pearl Harbor and so on, although it brought the United States into a war, did not bring the United States into the European war and, in other words, did not round out the war into a world war. This too, was a decision of Hitler. Of all Hitler's decisions it is, I think, the only one which has no rational explanation. The other decisions may have been wicked, they may have been miscalculated, they may have been aggressive, they may have been tyrannical, but it is perfectly possible (that is what people do not like about my book) to explain Hitler's wicked ways by reason and not by hysterics. I do not think he was mad at all, except insofar as anyone pursuing foreign or world policy is mad. There was a time when you could judge a man mad who prepared anything so appalling as the Second World War, but now when you contemplate the activities of American statesmen and Soviet statesman conceiving wickedness far

beyond anything ever thought of by earlier statesmen of any century it is very difficult to get worked up about the wickedness of World War II. The fascinating thing is that you can explain everything, except Hitler's declaration of war on the United States and Hitler obviously found it puzzling himself, since he commented, on occasion, that Germany ought to be fighting on the side of the Anglo-Saxon powers, but that providence had imposed upon her this world historical mistake²¹. That is a good way to describe the outbreak of a world war.

Addendum

Small Wars, Great Wars, World Wars

When delivering this lecture it occurred to me that it might help historical understanding to discriminate more precisely between types of war by size and character. We cannot draw a precise line of size but the distinction is clear enough. The Schleswig-Holstein war of 1864 was obviously a small war. The Napoleonic Wars were obviously a Great War and indeed were the first to be known as such. Even so, it is worth remembering that all the principal Powers of Europe were not engaged simultaneously against Napoleon until 1813. Until then Napoleon was the only factor tying the wars together.

The other most usual distinction is of place. The campaigns of King Henry V are known in English history as the French wars. I do not know what the French call them. The first Great War of the twentieth century was to all intents and purposes an exclusively European war. The little colonial campaigns in Africa or the British campaign against the Ottoman Empire hardly count. At the end of the Great War, as contemporaries called it, the British Colonel Repington invented the title of World War 'to prevent the millenian folk', he said, 'from forgetting that the history of the world is the history of war'. Quite clearly the Great War of the early twentieth century was not a World War, but thanks to the diarist Colonel Repington we are stuck with it.

When another large-scale war or perhaps rather an assembly of different wars broke out at some date between 1932 and 1943 we were stuck with the name World War and mistakenly adopted it for this miscellaneous collection of wars. I have amused myself and I hope my readers by attempting a periodisation of wars which occurred in the years usually allotted to the Second World War and allotting them to a specific class. No doubt I have left some out:

China and Japan, 1931-33, renewed rather feebly 1937 and after – small war;

Italy and Abyssinnia, 1935-36 – small war;

Germany and Poland, September 1939 – small war;

Germany and France, May-June 1940, expected to be a great war, turned out to be a small one;

Germany and Great Britain, June-September 1940, there-
after a deadlock and no serious military engagements until
1944 – small war;

Italy and Great Britain, war in Africa, autumn 1940-May
1943 – small war;

Italy and Greece, November 1940-April 1941 – small war;

Germany and Yugoslavia, April 1941 – small war;

Germany and Soviet Union, June 1941, expected to be a
small war (Hitler thought it would be over sooner than
the French campaign), turned out to be a Great War in a
limited sphere, July 1941-May 1945;

Japan and United States, December 1941-September 1945, a
Great War in a limited sphere;

Japan and Great Britain, December 1941-September 1945 –
a Great War at outset, then a small war until summer 1945;

Germany and United States, December 1941-May 1945 –
small war, indeed a purely theoretical war until June 1944,
then a Great War;

Anglo-American campaign in Italy, September 1943-May
1945 – aspired to be a Great War, became in fact a small
one of little significance;

Japan and Soviet Union, last week of August 1945.

Conclusion

At least two Great Wars are required to make a World War. The two Great Wars – Pacific and European – occurred together from 6 June 1944 until 8 May 1945. Those eleven months alone deserve the title of Second World War.

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- ¹³ Cf. *Bond*, British Military Policy; also *R. P. Shay jr.*, British Rearmament in the Thirties. Politics and Profits, Princeton/N. J. 1977.
- ¹⁴ *S. Newman*, March 1939: The British Guarantee to Poland. A Study in the Continuity of British Foreign Policy, Oxford 1976.
- ¹⁵ *D. L. Hoggan*, Der erzwungene Krieg. Die Ursachen und Urheber des 2. Weltkriegs, Tübingen 1964.
- ¹⁶ Cf. *Newman*, pp. 119-21; *Bond*, pp. 318-19.
- ¹⁷ *H. R. Trevor Roper*, A. J. P. Taylor, Hitler and the War, in: Encounter 19 (July 1961), pp. 88-96.
- ¹⁸ See note 3.
- ¹⁹ See among others *J. Lukacs*, The Last European War, September 1939-December 1941, London 1977; *H. Michel*, La Seconde Guerre Mondiale, Paris 1968; *A. Hillgruber*, Hitlers Strategie. Politik und Kriegsführung 1940-1941, Frankfurt a.M. 1965.
- ²⁰ See *L. Allen*, Singapore, 1941-1942, London 1977; *Chr. Thorne*, Allies of a Kind. The United States, Britain and the War against Japan, 1941-1945, London 1978.
- ²¹ Cf. *D. Irving*, Hitler's War, London 1977, p. 354; see also *F. Genoud* (ed.), The Testament of Adolf Hitler. The Hitler-Bormann Documents, introd. by H. R. Trevor-Roper, London 1960, p. 98.