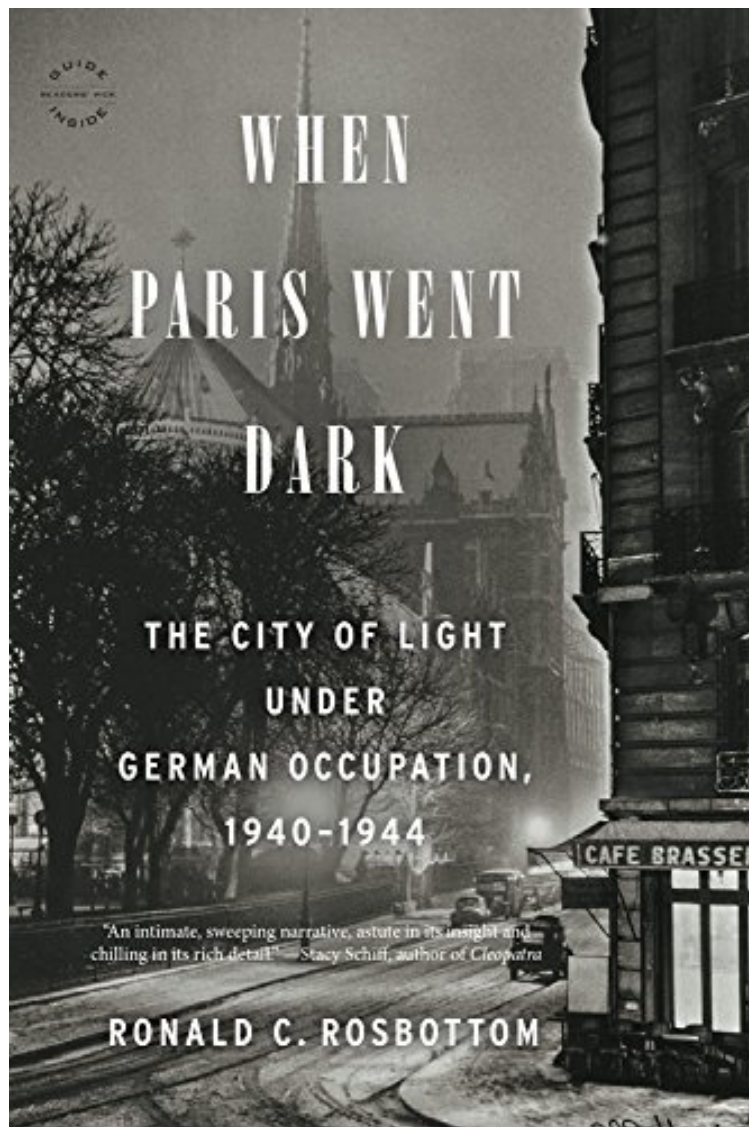


# When Paris Went Dark: The City of Light Under German Occupation, 1940-1944

Ronald C. Rosbottom

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#279229 in Books Rosbottom Ronald C 2015-03-17 2015-03-17 Original language: English PDF # 1 5.50 x 1.25 x 8.25l, .60 #File Name: 0316217433496 pages When Paris Went Dark The City of Light Under German Occupation 1940 1944 | File size: 48.Mb

**Ronald C. Rosbottom : When Paris Went Dark: The City of Light Under German Occupation, 1940-1944** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised When Paris Went Dark: The City of Light Under German Occupation, 1940-1944:

86 of 87 people found the following review helpful. Excellent history of Paris in World War II By Kenneth B.

Strumpf This was an excellent and very comprehensive telling of the story of Paris under German occupation. By and large the book takes a chronological look at the event. It begins with a brief discussion of the early part of World War II followed by the German attack and the stunning collapse of French resistance. The French decision to not defend Paris was not a foregone conclusion, they could have fought, but in fact not a single shot was fired in anger at the Germans as they took the city. This decision would haunt the psyche of Parisians perhaps to the present day, as the author makes clear. The bulk of the book is taken up with a narrative of how both the occupied and occupiers dealt with first the German victory and later the looming German defeat. The chapter on how Germans dealt with being occupiers was very interesting, it's a topic not usually covered in books about the war. The chapter on the roundup of French Jews in 1942 was heart-breaking. The author repeatedly emphasized that this was almost entirely a French effort, with little German involvement. The grinding length of the occupation is a theme frequently brought up. It ground down both occupied and occupiers. The various resistance movements as well as the pathetic Vichy government are covered in detail. Finally, the book ends with a discussion on how France processed, and continues to process, both the fact of defeat and the later liberation. The various attempts to rewrite history to serve the political agendas of the many French political factions was fascinating. One particularly interesting theme of the book is the whole concept of what was meant by "collaboration" and "resistance". These terms turn out to be far more ambiguous than they appear at first glance. Was a waiter who served tea to a German officer at a cafe a collaborator or merely someone trying to get by? What about a French prostitute who sold her services to German soldiers? Or a Vichy minister motivated by patriotic impulses to serve in the Petain government, like future President Francois Mitterrand? Resistance turns out to be equally difficult to define. It's one thing to describe someone who shot a German soldier on a Parisian street as a resister, but what about a man who refused to speak to the German officer billeted in his home? As the book makes clear this is a question that troubles France to this day. I really can't recommend this book highly enough. The writing is fluid and highly readable. The author makes use of a variety of sources and uses many anecdotes to humanize the topic. Even the footnotes are interesting. I learned a lot that I didn't previously know despite having read quite a bit about France during the war. For instance, the Parisians didn't really seem to mind the occupation very much during the first year or so, although they wished for a swift British capitulation in the hopes that this would persuade the Germans to leave. Also, Paris had a mini-civil war in the months just following the liberation, with many dying in the process. I never knew this. It's hard to believe that at this late date there is still more to learn about World War II but this book proves it for me. 17 of 17 people found the following review helpful. ... of Paris from 1940 to 1944 gave me an excellent sense of what it must have been like living ... By John Ronald Rosbottom's story of the Nazi occupation of Paris from 1940 to 1944 gave me an excellent sense of what it must have been like living in almost Orwellian existence because of the total control the Third Reich had over its citizens by creating an atmosphere of fear and suspicion in the city. It's astounding that Paris was taken by the German forces with no resistance. Hitler is photographed with the Eiffel Tower in the background, and other photos show a city with empty and eerie-looking street scenes, conveying the scene of a ghost town. Der Fuhrer's respect and admiration for Paris before and during the occupation is well covered. However, as the Nazis begin their retreat from the allied forces in 1944, he demands from his generals that Paris be burned to the ground, a command that, fortunately, was not carried out. There is much detail about the French collaboration with Germans in sending the Jews to the concentration camps and the fraternization of French women with the Germans. This book brings to the surface the shame and embarrassment the French people must feel regarding this sad and humiliating period in their history. However, it's a story that is important to tell, and Ronald Rosbottom's has done an excellent job in doing that. This is a must read for those wanting to learn about this bleak and depressing time in the history of a revered capital city of a great nation. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. It is sad to learn the complicity of the French in the ... By Warren J. Nelson An outstanding read. Very well written. Not many people know much about the 50 months that the Nazi's occupied Paris. It is sad to learn the complicity of the French in the rounding up of the Jews during this period. Bizarre how Paris of all places avoided much damage due to the occupation. Strange how things worked out. In that sense the occupation was a blessing. Also some senior Nazi's displayed considerable courage in ignoring Hitler's orders in 1944 to level Paris. Also inspiring to read about the amazing courage of some young Parisian's in their resistance efforts many of whom paid the ultimate price for their efforts. This book helps insure that their names will not be forgotten.

The spellbinding and revealing chronicle of Nazi-occupied Paris On June 14, 1940, German tanks entered a silent and nearly deserted Paris. Eight days later, France accepted a humiliating defeat and foreign occupation. Subsequently, an eerie sense of normalcy settled over the City of Light. Many Parisians keenly adapted themselves to the situation—even allied themselves with their Nazi overlords. At the same time, amidst this darkening gloom of German ruthlessness, deportations, shortages, and curfews, a resistance arose. Parisians of all stripes—Jews, immigrants, adolescents, communists, rightists, cultural icons such as Colette, de Beauvoir, Camus, and Sartre, as well as police officers, teachers, students, and store owners—rallied around a little-known French military officer, Charles de Gaulle. **WHEN PARIS WENT DARK** evokes with stunning precision the detail of daily life in a city under occupation, and the brave people who fought against the darkness. Relying on a range of resources—memoirs, diaries, letters, archives,

interviews, personal histories, flyers and posters, fiction, photographs, film and historical studies---Rosbottom has forged a groundbreaking book that will forever influence how we understand those dark years in the City of Light.

"A riveting account of one of the most resonant hostage-takings in history: the 1,500 days when a swastika flew from the Eiffel Tower. Ronald Rosbottom illuminates every corner of a darkened, heartsick city, exploring the oddities, capturing the grisly humor, and weighing the prices of resistance, accommodation, collaboration. The result is an intimate, sweeping narrative, astute in its insight and chilling in its rich detail." Stacy Schiff, author of *Cleopatra, A Great Improvisation, and Vra*"When Paris Went Dark recounts, through countless compelling stories, how Nazi occupation drained the light from Paris and how many of its residents resisted in ways large and small. This is a rich work of history, a brilliant recounting of how hope can still flourish in the rituals of daily life." Scott Turow, author of *Identical*"Ronald Rosbottom has recreated the Parisian world during the dark days of the German occupation like no previous writer I know. His secret is two-fold: first, exhaustive research that allows him to recover what we might call the importance of the ordinary; and second, a shrewd grasp of how memory works, often in strange ways." Joseph J. Ellis, Ford Foundation Professor Emeritus at Mount Holyoke College, author of *Founding Brothers, American Sphinx, and Revolutionary Summer*"Rosbottom explains the interactions of the French and their occupiers in a way that illuminates their separate miseries. He makes us see that we can never judge those who lived during the occupation just because we know the outcome....The author attentively includes German and French letters and journals that explain the loneliness, desperation, and the very French way of getting by....A profound historical portrait of Paris for anyone who loves the city."-Kirkus sAbout the Author Ronald C. Rosbottom is the Winifred L. Arms Professor in the Arts and Humanities and Professor of French and European Studies at Amherst College. Previously, he was the Dean of the Faculty at Amherst, Chair of the Romance Languages Department at The Ohio State University, and taught at the University of Pennsylvania. He lives in Amherst, Massachusetts.