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

By Ronald C. Rosbottom

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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.

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Review
"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** *Véra*

"*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 Reviews*

About 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.

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