



The French Resistance

By Olivier Wieviorka

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“Whatever happens, the flame of French resistance must not and will not go out.” As Charles de Gaulle ended his radio address to the French nation in June 1940, listeners must have felt a surge of patriotism tinged with uncertainty. Who would keep the flame burning through dark years of occupation? At what cost?

Olivier Wieviorka presents a comprehensive history of the French Resistance, synthesizing its social, political, and military aspects to offer fresh insights into its operation. Detailing the Resistance from the inside out, he reveals not one organization but many interlocking groups often at odds over goals, methods, and leadership. He debunks lingering myths, including the idea that the Resistance sprang up in response to the exhortations of de Gaulle’s Free French government-in-exile. The Resistance was homegrown, arising from the soil of French civil society. Resisters had to improvise in the fight against the Nazis and the collaborationist Vichy regime. They had no blueprint to follow, but resisters from all walks of life and across the political spectrum formed networks, organizing activities from printing newspapers to rescuing downed airmen to sabotage. Although the Resistance was never strong enough to fight the Germans openly, it provided the Allies invaluable intelligence, sowed havoc behind enemy lines on D-Day, and played a key role in Paris’s liberation.

Wieviorka shatters the conventional image of a united resistance with no interest in political power. But setting the record straight does not tarnish the legacy of its fighters, who braved Nazism without blinking.

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The French Resistance By Olivier Wieviorka Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Review

The work of [a] seasoned scholar and energetic researcher... The ultimate question is what difference the French Resistance really made. Wieviorka considers this matter most fully. (Robert O. Paxton *New York Review of Books* 2016-02-25)

[Wieviorka] carefully traces the evolution of the often-fraught relationship between the internal Resistance in France and Charles de Gaulle's London-based Free French, the Resistance's growing complexity (and costliness) as a bureaucracy, and its debates over goals and approaches... Few historians can navigate the complexities of this period with Wieviorka's skill and assurance. (Robert Zaretsky *Chronicle of Higher Education* 2016-04-17)

The Resistance has found its historian. (*Le Point*)

Olivier Wieviorka [is] one of the most brilliant historians of his generation. (*L'Express*)

Wieviorka brings important insights into a critical and often misunderstood topic. Going beyond the myths and partisanship surrounding the Resistance, and World War II more generally, this book will help set the tone for future work on the period. (Michael S. Neiberg, author of *The Blood of Free Men: The Liberation of Paris, 1944*)

A wide-ranging synthesis that treats a compelling subject with an equal mix of critical intelligence and deep respect. For serious, thoughtful readers who want to get a look at the Resistance as the most recent scholarship now sees it, with many of the mythic cobwebs swept away, this is the book for them. (Philip Nord, author of *France 1940: Defending the Republic*)

An admirable history and the best single-volume work on the subject so far. (Patrick Marnham *Literary Review* 2016-06-01)

Magisterial... Wieviorka shows that the Resistance was divided and fragmented from the start, and that the many and varied organizations that constituted it were often driven by political ideology... [An] engrossing book. (Richard J. Evans *London Review of Books* 2016-11-03)

About the Author

Olivier Wieviorka is Professor of History at the École Normale Supérieure de Cachan.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Warren Damron:

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with theme for entertaining for example comic or novel. The The French Resistance is kind of publication which is giving the reader unstable experience.

Ethel Fung:

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