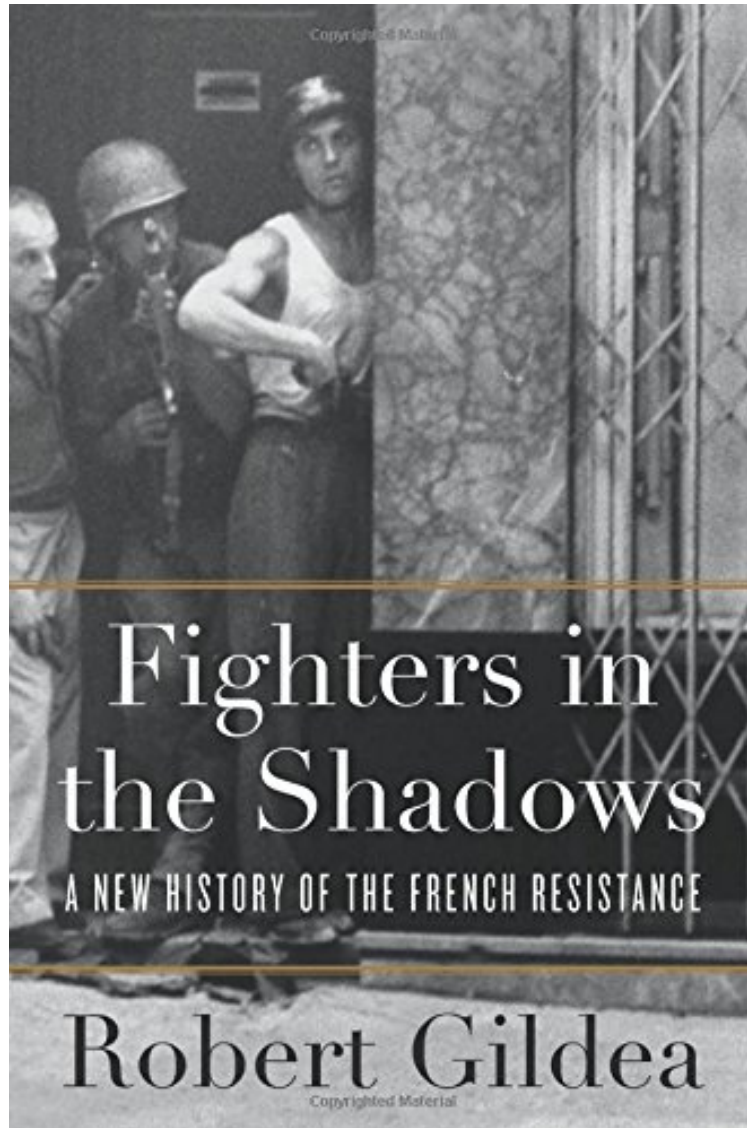


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## **Fighters in the Shadows: A New History of the French Resistance**

*Robert Gildea*

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#623868 in Books Robert Gildea 2015-11-30Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.40 x 1.80 x 6.301, .0 #File Name: 0674286103608 pagesFighters in the Shadows A New History of the French Resistance | File size: 21.Mb

**Robert Gildea : *Fighters in the Shadows: A New History of the French Resistance*** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *Fighters in the Shadows: A New History of the French Resistance*:

5 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Difficult but necessary readBy Robert J. PennyI found this book to be highly informative. A bit weak on Normandy and Brittany,but was able to provide a superior picture of the varied

backgrounds of the many individuals and groups who made up the resistance. At times, the book was a difficult read, especially keeping track of the many, many abbreviations and acronyms in the text. Yet, the book is a valuable source of sound up-to-date info. on the period. Great and necessary for studying France. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By James Kimpton An interesting book in good condition 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Well researched. Powerful narrative. By SILVIO A MOTA Well researched. Powerful narrative.

The French Resistance has an iconic status in the struggle to liberate Nazi-occupied Europe, but its story is entangled in myths. Gaining a true understanding of the Resistance means recognizing how its image has been carefully curated through a combination of French politics and pride, ever since jubilant crowds celebrated Paris's liberation in August 1944. Robert Gildea's penetrating history of resistance in France during World War II sweeps aside "the French Resistance" of a thousand clichés, showing that much more was at stake than freeing a single nation from Nazi tyranny. As *Fighters in the Shadows* makes clear, French resistance was part of a Europe-wide struggle against fascism, carried out by an extraordinarily diverse group: not only French men and women but Spanish Republicans, Italian anti-fascists, French and foreign Jews, British and American agents, and even German opponents of Hitler. In France, resistance skirted the edge of civil war between right and left, pitting non-communists who wanted to drive out the Germans and eliminate the Vichy regime while avoiding social revolution at all costs against communist advocates of national insurrection. In French colonial Africa and the Near East, battle was joined between de Gaulle's Free French and forces loyal to Vichy before they combined to liberate France. Based on a riveting reading of diaries, memoirs, letters, and interviews of contemporaries, *Fighters in the Shadows* gives authentic voice to the resisters themselves, revealing the diversity of their struggles for freedom in the darkest hours of occupation and collaboration.

With its deep concern for human failings, and for the suffering that came from bravery that was badly channeled or poorly rewarded, Gildea's book might have been dark and pessimistic. In fact it is vivid with real life and ordinary heroism. In this, what is an apparently straightforward aim? that Gildea felt it was high time to give resistance fighters their voice in the story? is in fact deeply important... The relentless, persistent way in which Gildea gives voice to a kaleidoscope of men and women of different nationalities and races does more than any author before him to provide a convincingly complex and moving account of the ways in which people in France took up arms against the Vichy state and the Nazi occupation. This book cuts against the grain of classic narratives, not by setting out counter-narratives but by asking for our attention, for a page or two at a time, to listen to detail: the real-life detail of the frustrations, the suffering and heroism of people who exist at several removes from the grand shapers of history. (Julian Wright *Times Literary Supplement* 2016-01-08) An important new book... [Gildea] blends top-down history with the bottom-up stories of those who schemed, improvised, grabbed chances and risked their lives. (The Economist 2015-08-29) [An] ambitious overview of the Vichy years... There have been many excellent recent books, both in French and in English... on France during the resistance years. What Gildea has done is to step back and look at the wider picture, thereby providing a context for the individual acts of courage, which he celebrates in moving detail. He gives recognition to the widest range of participants, many of them little known, and to the categories who did not fit well into the postwar myth of heroism, and that is perhaps his most important contribution to the field. (Caroline Moorhead *The Guardian* 2015-08-19) Deeply researched [and] sophisticated... The picture of the Resistance movement to emerge in Gildea's account is far, far more complicated and morally ambiguous than the myth would suggest... Gildea is at his best in conveying a richly textured picture of the Resistance as diverse in makeup, motivation, and strategy... Gildea's masterly account of the liberation of Paris, and of de Gaulle's crafty work in outmaneuvering the Communist effort to spark a people's uprising, is one of the highlights of this fine contribution to our understanding of World War II's most important resistance movement. (James A. Warren *Daily Beast* 2015-12-10) Scrupulous, evenhanded reconsideration of the fighters of the French Resistance and how the patriotic myth became central to the identity of postwar France. Employing a refreshing approach to the history of this traumatic epoch by sticking with firsthand testimony, both written and oral, Gildea restores some of the marginalized voices so crucial to the story: women, communists, and foreigners... Gildea proceeds step by step in the buildup to resistance, which required both an internal and external network, especially from de Gaulle's Allied base in London. Moreover, the liberation by the Americans of North Africa in November 1942 proved to be the 'hinge' in galvanizing resistance and clarifying the Vichy versus Free French struggle. A masterly, painstakingly researched study incorporating the urgent stories of the resisters themselves. (Kirkus s (starred review) 2015-09-15) This book is a must-read. It paints on a broad canvas the story of the men and the women, French and foreign, who fought and fell in the ranks of the French Resistance, following the interior resistance and the Free French, political movements, Allied intelligence networks and the maquis. Gildea confronts the dissensions that divided the Resistance and evokes the many and complex emotions experienced by its fighters. He has accomplished a tour de force. (Guillaume Piketty, Professor of History, Sciences Po, Paris) Gildea is among the best historians writing today about French identity, and specifically about how France's national myths have been re-formed over the past 75 years... His compellingly detailed? and lengthy? book brings forth the testimonies of many résistants and résistantes that have been gathering dust in archives, in museums, in forgotten memoirs and in

the memories of still living actors in the drama. He has done a daunting amount of research, ranging from an almost archaeological fascination with the layers of myth surrounding the meaning of 'resistance' to compassionate interviews with survivors and their descendants. *Fighters in the Shadows* gives us a cacophony of voices, subtly orchestrated by a historian who loves France, yet one who respects historical objectivity...Gildea is meticulous in his analysis of how the French have remembered this fateful half-decade in their history. In the final chapters, he deftly leads us through the minefield of postwar collective memory. (Ronald C. Rosbottom Wall Street Journal 2016-01-01)About the AuthorRobert Gildea is Professor of Modern History at the University of Oxford.