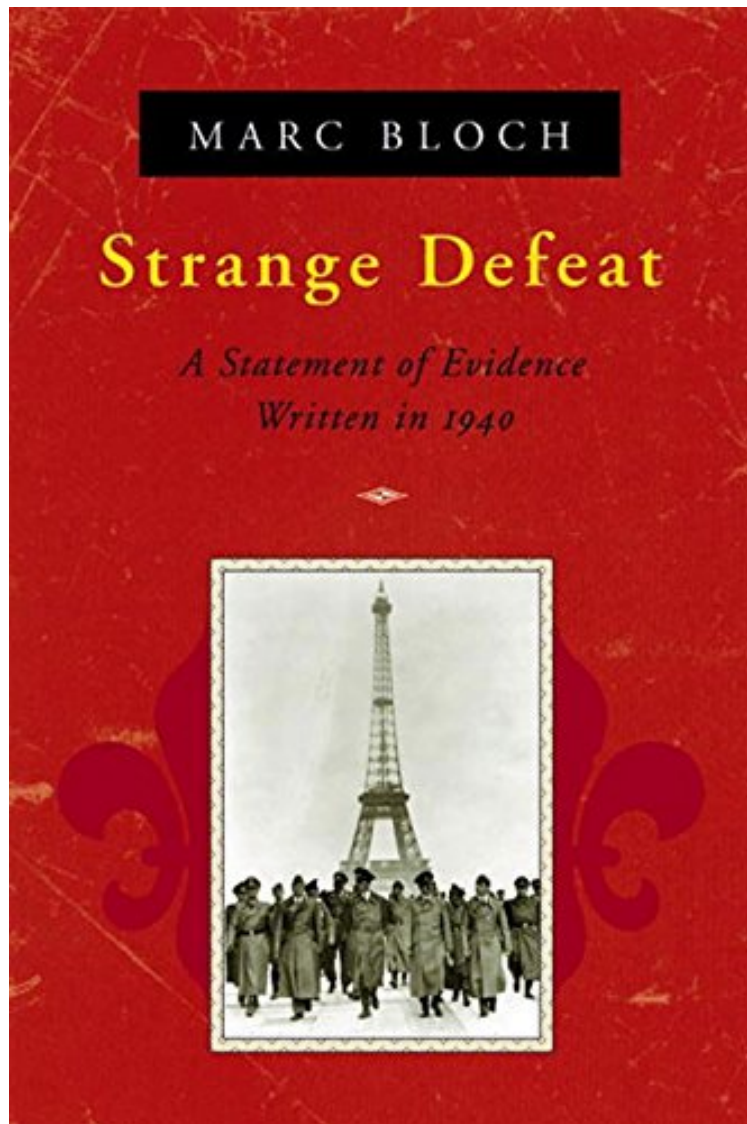


Strange Defeat

Marc Bloch

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#409334 in Books Marc Bloch 1999-07-17 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.30 x .60 x 5.60l, .42 #File Name: 0393319113204 pages Strange Defeat A Statement of Evidence Written in 1940 | File size: 63.Mb

Marc Bloch : Strange Defeat before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Strange Defeat:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Exceptional and accurate analysis of French defeat in WWII By Steven Donaldson As both an avid reader of WWII history and early 20th century European history I find Marc Bloch's analysis of the French defeat not only insightful but his first hand accounts amazingly accurate. His original book was hastily written following the French loss. At the time he was a renowned Medieval history professor who took up his

reserve status in the French Army at the age of 52 only to see the arrogance, ineptitude and disgrace of the self-serving leadership of the French Army and government under Henri Phillippe Petan. This later to be published book was found in a desk of the family home in the south of France. Having read several other short essays and books on the French defeat it's fascinating that the French, better armed, better prepared completely ignored the German's new strategies of combined air, tank and infantry tactics and the fast, penetrating attacks of the blitzkrieg. He clearly saw this first hand the alternatives the French had to stop the Germans following several eye witnesses accounts of battles and the unwillingness of the French to change tactics and to simply resupply their army. This is a shocking and eye opening view of how leadership can fail a nation. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Excellent Look at French Ground-eye View By PZGREN Strange Defeat presents the Fall of France, 1940 from the French perspective. Not the official self-defensive view of the French political-military establishment, but from the ground's-eye of a French Reservist Captain working in the Fuel Supply system in Northern France in 1940. It is written almost immediately after the campaign, and the author goes on to be tortured and killed by the Germans in 1944 for his activities in the Resistance. Marc Bloch was a professional historian of the Middle Ages, so the prose can be a tad elaborate, but it is frankly a refreshing difference from the routine language of most military histories. Much of the analysis is about French military politics in the period before the war and why the outcome was pre-ordained by the decisions the French made. He counterposes the French decisions and methods to that of the Germans in the interwar period and during the Phoney War. As a proper historian, he gives the Germans credit where it is due -- despite his obvious historical antipathy towards them (he fought in the Great War). It is also a subtle window into the French social system of classes and the tensions between them, he unabashedly supports his own class and that of the working man -- which not only explains some of the events leading to 1940, but offers insight into the post-war actions of DeGaulle and others. 2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Nostalgia is a fatal flaw in world affairs. By Charles A. Krohn This book is perhaps more timely today than it was when it was written for the wisdom it imports. As other reviewers note, on one level it deals with the causes that contributed to France's capitulation to the Nazis in 1940. But the insights into human nature are timeless, especially now since we've lost several wars in Afghanistan and Iraq with worse days perhaps ahead. Bloch suggests that leadership by the elderly, physically and mentally, cannot survive contact with the vigorous impulses of youth. Although he was executed by the Nazis for his role in the Resistance, he gives them begrudging credit their revolutionary notions of warfare that leapfrogged the practices and strategy of the old regime. I suspect we're about to see history repeat itself in the youthful crowds behind Trump and Sanders, looking for a new way out. I hope they find it in the time I have left.

A renowned historian and Resistance fighter ? later executed by the Nazis ? analyzes at first hand why France fell in 1940. Marc Bloch wrote Strange Defeat during the three months following the fall of France, after he returned home from military service. In the midst of his anguish, he nevertheless "brought to his study of the crisis all the critical faculty and all the penetrating analysis of a first-rate historian" (Christian Science Monitor). Bloch takes a close look at the military failures he witnessed, examining why France was unable to respond to attack quickly and effectively. He gives a personal account of the battle of France, followed by a biting analysis of the generation between the wars. His harsh conclusion is that the immediate cause of the disaster was the utter incompetence of the High Command, but his analysis ranges broadly, appraising all the factors, social as well as military, which since 1870 had undermined French national solidarity. "Much has been, and will be, written in explanation of the defeat of France in 1940, but it seems unlikely that the truth of the matter will ever be more accurately and more vividly presented than in this statement of evidence." ? P. J. Philip, New York Times Book Review "The most wisdom-packed commentary on the problem set [before] all intelligent and patriotic Frenchmen by the events of 1940." ? D. W. Brogan, Spectator

Much has been, and will be, written in explanation of the defeat of France in 1940, but it seems unlikely that the truth of the matter will ever be more accurately and more vividly presented than in this statement of evidence. -- P. J. Philip, New York Times Book The most wisdom-packed commentary on the problem set [before] all intelligent and patriotic Frenchmen by the events of 1940. -- D. W. Brogan, Spectator About the Author Marc Bloch was a French historian who cofounded the Annales School of French social history. He was captured and shot by the Gestapo in 1944 for his work with the French Resistance.