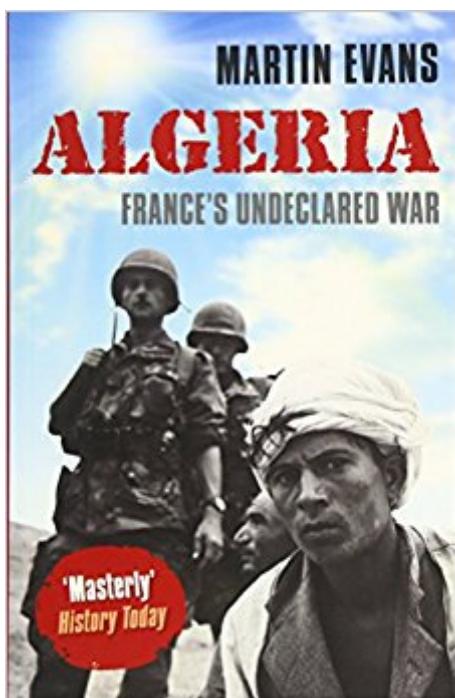


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# Algeria: France's Undeclared War (Making Of The Modern World)



## Synopsis

Invaded in 1830, populated by one million settlers who co-existed uneasily with nine million Arabs and Berbers, Algeria was different from other French colonies because it was administered as an integral part of France, in theory no different from Normandy or Brittany. The depth and scale of the colonization process explains why the Algerian War of 1954 to 1962 was one of the longest and most violent of the decolonization struggles. An undeclared war in the sense that there was no formal beginning of hostilities, the war produced huge tensions that brought down four governments, ended the Fourth Republic in 1958, and mired the French army in accusations of torture and mass human rights abuses. In carefully re-examining the origins and consequences of the conflict, Martin Evans argues that it was the Socialist led Republican Front, in power from January 1956 until May 1957, which was the defining moment in the war. Predicated on the belief in the universal civilizing mission of the Fourth Republic, coupled with the conviction that Algerian nationalism was feudal and religiously fanatical in character, the Republican Front dramatically intensified the war in the spring of 1956. Drawing upon previously classified archival sources as well as new oral testimonies, this book underlines the conflict of values between the Republican Front and Algerian nationalism, explaining how this clash produced patterns of thought and action, such as the institutionalization of torture and the raising of pro-French Muslim militias, which tragically polarized choices and framed all subsequent stages of the conflict.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"A carefully nuanced history of the Algerian War...This highly detailed, well-written, well-researched book will likely be the definitive history of the Algerian War for many years to come."

--CHOICE "Fascinating insights into the origins of Algerian independence." --History Today "Algeria combines excellent scholarship with crossover appeal for a general audience. While preserving academic rigor, the book has the clarity and narrative force to draw in general readers as well as lower-level students... A fine example of academic work with ambitious scope and a robust allegiance to historical justice" --African Studies Quarterly "Algeria: France's Undeclared War will interest specialists and nonspecialists alike, and it will be essential for teachers of North African and French colonial history." -M. Kathryn Edwards, African Studies Review

Martin Evans is Professor of Contemporary History at the University of Portsmouth. He is the author of *Memory of Resistance: French Opposition to the Algerian War*, co-author (with Emmanuel Godin) of *France 1815 to 2003*, and co-author (with John Phillips) of *Algeria: Anger of the Dispossessed*. In 2008 *Memory of Resistance* was translated into French and serialised in the Algerian press. He has written for the *Independent*, the *Times Higher Education Supplement*, *BBC History Magazine* and the *Guardian*, and is a regular contributor to *History Today*. In 2007-08 he was a Leverhulme Senior Research Fellow at the British Academy.

I served as a paratrooper during the five most violent years of the Algerian war, only leaving for France a few weeks before Algerian independence in 1962. I have therefore always taken great interest in everything published on that conflict in several languages, including Alistair Horne's excellent 'A Savage War of Peace', which is also worth 5 stars. But this book is just that much better, and I would actually have given it 6 stars if I could. It brings the whole conflict beautifully into context and does not shy away from describing some of the worst atrocities conducted by both sides. This book should be required reading in all officers' academies everywhere, and I would wholeheartedly recommend it for all politicians as well. Then perhaps there could, just perhaps, be fewer instances of those mistakes and unnecessary atrocities that were inflicted on combatants and civilians alike during the Algerian war. But I must confess that I don't expect to see that happening during my lifetime, judging by what has been going on in the various conflicts around the world lately.

Excellent work. Evans' ideology shines through, and he is clearly less interested in the military-historical aspects of the conflict than the political and social aspects, but this is nonetheless

the best single-volume work on the Algerian war since "A Savage War of Peace."

Before reading this book I had no idea of what transpired in the French Algerian War circa 1954/1962. I knew that the French when it gave Algeria its independence, had essentially marked the end of its colonial era. In French history the period from 1940 to 1962 saw France descend from a major World power to a shadow polemic weak sister which had lost most of its world influence. In surrendering on the battlefields of the Western Front to the Germans in 1940 and forming the disastrous Vichy government which was nothing more than a puppet instrument for the Nazi government, we see the beginning of the end in their World influence. After the embarrassment of WWII, the French couldn't help themselves as they tried to return to their colonies of Southeast Asia that was French Indo-China. In eight years of constant warfare with the Viet Minh they lost their stake in Southeast Asia with their defeat at the hands of the Viet Minh at Dien Bien Phu. This war was indeed complex and involved three political entities along with the French colonial troops and the French Foreign Legion who lost this most mysterious war. Unfortunately the epic struggle would continue with the Americans taking the baton to eventual ruin and unneeded frustration. Even after the fall of French Indo-China, France found itself in another struggle with its most coveted colonial possession that being Algeria. In the eyes of most Frenchmen, Algeria was much more than just another colonial possession, it was considered part of the French metropole. In fact it was considered as much of the French nation just as the USA considers Hawaii and Alaska part of the United States. The French had colonized Algeria in 1830 and regarded the Mediterranean Sea as a mere lake separating it from mainland France. What Martin Evans gives to the reader is a full account of the settlement through to the days of the undeclared war which lasted eight years almost the length of its debacle in Southeast Asia. While the Algerian War had much the same aspects of the French Indo-China, the war in Algeria was very much different as Evans describes the torturing that was used on both sides of the war by the FLN and the French Army. As in Southeast Asia where three political entities were utilized this was also true in Algeria where there were the French Army forces, the FLN and later the rebellious French OAS organization. The complex mixture of political entities made for a very confusing scenario which played out its opus during an eight year long struggle which not only divided the French people but also the Arab culture in Algeria. As confusing and frustrating as these actions were Evans tries to put together a story which explains in full what had happened and even goes further to explain how Algeria went on after France granted Algeria its independence. This book is an excellent primer in explaining France's last colonial struggle. If you have any inkling in trying to understand this war, this is

the book to read.

The social and political follow up to *A Savage War of Peace*. Evans puts the Algerian conflict into a 21st century context. He takes the thread into modern French society and politics. A must read for serious students of our century.

Lived 3 years in Paris. Provides great perspective on problems that continue to exist today with France and its Afro/Arab population.

A thorough and accessible history of a unknown but influential event that continues to shape our world today.

the post WW II Franco-Algerian War, The Dirty War, forecasted the barbarity of Post WW II Colonial Wars of Liberation, Nationalism, National Wars of Liberation Communism vs the West NATO

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