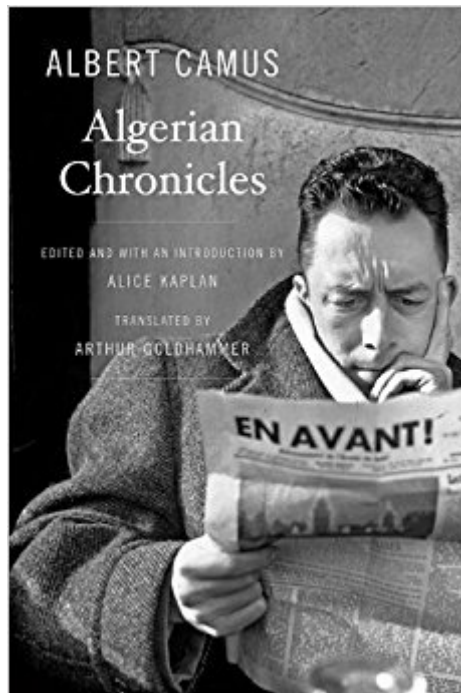




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Algerian Chronicles



Synopsis

More than fifty years after Algerian independence, Albert Camus "Algerian Chronicles" appears here in English for the first time. Published in France in 1958, the same year the Algerian War brought about the collapse of the Fourth French Republic, it is one of Camus most political works an exploration of his commitments to Algeria. Dismissed or disdained at publication, today "Algerian Chronicles, " with its prescient analysis of the dead end of terrorism, enjoys a new life in Arthur Goldhammer s elegant translation. Believe me when I tell you that Algeria is where I hurt at this moment, Camus, who was the most visible symbol of France s troubled relationship with Algeria, writes, as others feel pain in their lungs. Gathered here are Camus strongest statements on Algeria from the 1930s through the 1950s, revised and supplemented by the author for publication in book form. In her introduction, Alice Kaplan illuminates the dilemma faced by Camus: he was committed to the defense of those who suffered colonial injustices, yet was unable to support Algerian national sovereignty apart from France. An appendix of lesser-known texts that did not appear in the French edition complements the picture of a moralist who posed questions about violence and counter-violence, national identity, terrorism, and justice that continue to illuminate our contemporary world."

Book Information

Paperback: 240 pages

Publisher: Belknap Press; Reprint edition (November 24, 2014)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0674416759

ISBN-13: 978-0674416758

Product Dimensions: 0.8 x 5.5 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (20 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

Anyone already familiar with Albert Camus knows about his lonely and agonized stance on Algeria. As a native son of the European settler community the generally left-leaning Camus never unequivocally embraced anti-colonialism. Instead, he appealed for reconciliation between

Europeans and Arabs, believing that both communities belonged to Algeria. By the time this anthology of articles and letters was published in 1958 his voice went unheeded as FLN terrorism and French Army torture defined the Algerian conflict. A fatal car accident prevented Camus from witnessing the final endgame of a war now obscure to the average American. Now available in English *Algerian Chronicles* may not be part of the essential Camus yet it is the summation of an important part of his life - his response to war in the land of his birth. His humanistic political morality has previously been available to English readers in Camus's other nonfiction, particularly *Neither Victims nor Executioners* and *Resistance, Rebellion and Death*. This book expresses that humanism in regard to the French-Algerian War as Camus appealed for reason and denounced excesses on both sides. The contents cover twenty years of writing. The first seven chapters describe the misery of the Kabyla region. In these 1939 newspaper articles Camus describes poverty under French colonialism establishing credentials as a European not indifferent to the colonized. The rest of the book is mostly from the 1950s with a few postwar articles from *Combat*. An appendix of writing not in the original edition is invaluable. Included is *Le Monde* article which was the source of Camus's often quoted response to terrorism, "I believe in justice, but I will defend my mother before justice."

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