



ENCYCLOPEDIA OF WOMEN AND ISLAMIC CULTURES

Women and Resistance under Colonialism: Algeria

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- ❖ By the time the Algerian War of Independence began in 1954, only 4.5% of Algerian women were literate and none had the right to vote.¹
- ❖ In 1974, the ministry for veterans' affairs in Algeria reported that roughly 11,000 women had fought during the War of Independence as spies, combatants, cooks, medics, and other important roles.²
- ❖ Of the women who participated in the resistance movement against French colonial rule, around 80% resided in the countryside.³
- ❖ Only around 2% of all women who participated in the War of Independence were involved in combat roles.⁴
- ❖ Approximately 2,000 Algerian women joined the *maquis* (the armed national resistance), around 74% of whom were under the age of 25 and 50% under the age of 20.⁵
- ❖ Between January and October of 1957, many "French Muslim" women in Algeria (the term used by the colonizing French administrators) dressed in civilian clothes and took part various bombings throughout Algiers, a campaign spearheaded by the National Liberation Front (FLN).⁶
- ❖ Throughout the Algerian War of Independence, the French military captured and tortured roughly 2,200 women revolutionaries.⁷
- ❖ In September 1958, for the first time under French colonial rule, Muslim Algerian women were able to vote on a referendum regarding the redrafting of the constitution.⁸

¹ <https://www.pdx.edu/honors/sites/www.pdx.edu.honors/files/6.%20Leonhardt%20Essay.pdf>

² <http://www.meredethturshen.com/www/pdf/SR%202002.pdf>

³ <http://chnm.gmu.edu/wwh/p/186.html>

⁴ http://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1006&context=french_honproj

⁵ https://muse.jhu.edu/journals/research_in_african_literatures/v030/30.3amrane-minne.html

⁶ <http://www.h-france.net/rude/rude%20volume%20ii/Vince%20Final%20Version.pdf>

⁷ <http://www.meredethturshen.com/www/pdf/SR%202002.pdf>

⁸ <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/algeria.htm>