

“Eyes to the South presents a fluid mosaic of actions, writings and theoretical positions as it follows simultaneously the shifting contexts of Algerian politics and society and the evolving consciousness and organizing of French anarchists in all their diversity.” —From the introduction

Eyes to the South

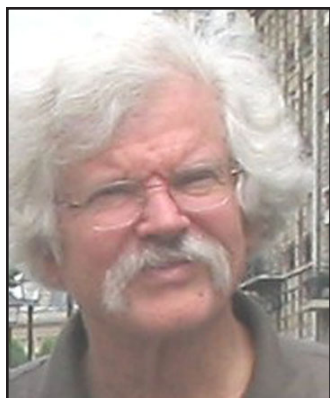
French Anarchists & Algeria

by David Porter

In a timely and unique account concerning this currently insurgent region of Africa and the Middle East, *Eyes to the South* presents an alternative, anti-authoritarian, bottom-up history and analysis of Algeria from 1954 to the present. Exploration of issues over the tumultuous past six decades include the oppressive reality of French colonial rule, a long and deadly nationalist revolution, a massive experience of workers' self-management, regimes of militarist and corrupt authoritarianism, attempts at economic privatization and a brief period of political liberalization, as well as the rise of radical Islamist politics, a decade of large-scale violent military/Islamist conflict, a separate insurgent revival of traditional decentralist resistance and political structures, conflicts over cultural identity, immigrant experience in France, continuing efforts at female emancipation and major “blowback” impacts on the politics of the ex-colonial power itself.

Exploration of all of these issues helps to clarify Algeria's current political, economic and social conditions and resonates with continuing conflicts and change in Africa and the Middle East more generally. At the same time, this book describes and analyzes the observers themselves—the various components of the French anarchist movement. The relationship of this important segment of the anti-authoritarian French left to the above issues finds expression in diverse and often competing tactical, strategic, substantive and organizational dimensions. In presenting these differences and the sometimes sharp critical debates within the movement, David Porter helps to clarify and enrich the discussion of such generic issues as national liberation, violence, revolution, the role of religion, liberal democracy, worker self-management and collaboration with statist in the broader anarchist and anti-authoritarian movements overall.

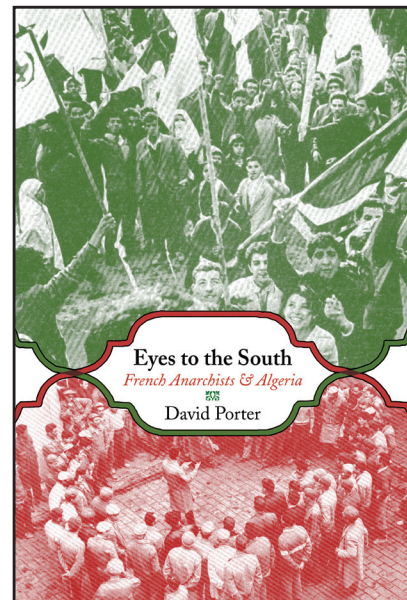
Eyes to the South is a unique and valuable contribution to understanding contemporary Algeria and its surrounding region, the modern French anarchist movement, and debates among anti-authoritarians internationally.



David Porter studied in Paris in the closing year of the Algerian national liberation war, 1961-62, and first-hand in independent Algeria in 1965-66. A professor emeritus at SUNY/Empire State College, he taught politics and history, including courses on modern Algeria, at the university level for 40 years. Since the 1960s, he taught and wrote numerous articles about revolution and anarchism, first inspired and educated in that decade by the vision and realities of the Algerian revolution and its experiment with workers' self-management, May 68 in France and the various North American liberatory movements at that time.

Aside from Algeria, the historical contexts of his writings range from anarchic dimensions of the American revolution era, the historical anarchist movement, and the Spanish revolution to the US war in Vietnam, 60s insurgency in the U.S. and political transformations in Eastern Europe two decades ago.

Recently, David Porter was tapped by the Institute for Public Accuracy to be their expert voice on the concept of a “leaderless revolution” in Egypt, and his recent article “Algeria & Tunisia: Separate Paths of Insurgency,” appeared on many blogs and news websites including Algerian oppositional site rachad.org, The Independent, Indymedia.org (Australia), nefac.net, the “nameless uncarved” blog, nothingness.org, and mobilebroadcastnews.com.



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French Anarchism & Algeria

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