



# Voices of the Foreign Legion: The History of the World's Most Famous Fighting Corps

*Adrian D. Gilbert*

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The French Foreign Legion has established a reputation as the most formidable of military forces. Created as a means of protecting French interests abroad, the legion spearheaded French colonialism in North Africa during the nineteenth century. Accepting volunteers from all parts of the world, the legion acquired an aura of mystery—and a less than enviable reputation for brutality within its ranks. Attracting recruits from all over the world, these new soldiers explain in their own words why they submitted themselves to such brutal training.

*Voices of the Foreign Legion* looks at how the legion selects its recruits, where they come from, and why they seek a life of incredible hardship and danger. It also analyzes the legion's strict attitude toward discipline, questions why desertion is a perennial problem, and assesses the legion's military achievements since its formation in 1831. Its scope ranges from the conquest of the colonies in Africa and the Far East, through the horrors of the two World Wars, to the bitter but ultimately hopeless battles to maintain France's imperial possessions.

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