



# Algeria, France: How memory works?

Historical imagination  
as a category of practice

## University of Oxford, 28–29 May 2018

European Studies Centre (St Antony's) & Maison Française d'Oxford

Convenor:

**Andrea Brazzoduro** (St Antony's, Oxford/MFO)

Keynote:

**Robert Gildea** (Worcester, Oxford)

Speakers:

**Emmanuel Alcaraz** (IRMC, Tunis), **Paul Betts** (St Antony's, Oxford), **Emmanuel Blanchard** (Versailles), **Claire Eldridge** (Leeds), **Fanny Gillet-Ouhenia** (Genève), **Daniel A. Gordon** (Edge Hill), **Ruth Harris** (All Souls, Oxford), **Dónal Hassett** (Bristol), **Hartmut Mayer** (Europaeum and St Antony's, Oxford), **James McDougall** (Trinity, Oxford), **Joseph McGonagle** (Manchester), **Abderrahmane Moussaoui** (LADEC, Lyon), **Karim Ouaras** (CEMA, Oran), **Tramor Quemeneur** (Paris), **Tamara Turner** (Max Planck, Berlin), **Natalya Vince** (IHTP, Paris & Portsmouth), **Michael Willis** (St Antony's, Oxford)

**FREE EVENT OPEN TO ALL**

[www.francealgeriaconference2018.com](http://www.francealgeriaconference2018.com)

To secure your place, please email: [european.studies@sant.ox.ac.uk](mailto:european.studies@sant.ox.ac.uk)



# PROGRAMME

## Monday, 28 May

European Studies Centre, St Antony's College | 70 Woodstock Rd, Oxford OX2 6HR

### 1.15pm - 1.30pm

REGISTRATION

### 1.30pm - 1.40pm

OPENING REMARKS

### 1.40pm - 3.10pm

MULTIDIRECTIONAL MEMORIES 1

Chair: **Natalya Vince** (IHTP, Paris & Portsmouth)

**Claire Eldridge** (Leeds): *Gendering Pied-Noir memories of the War of Independence*

**Emmanuel Blanchard** (Versailles): *On colonial legacies: An Algerian obsession in police practices and immigration policies (c. 1960–2010)*

**Daniel A. Gordon** (Edge Hill): *Sans Frontière and dissident memories of Algeria, 1979–1986*

### 3.10pm - 3.30pm

coffee

### 3.30pm - 5.00pm

SITES/VECTORS OF MEMORY

Chair: **James McDougall** (Trinity, Oxford)

**Emmanuel Alcaraz** (IRMC, Tunis): *Uses of Frantz Fanon in Algeria from 1962 to nowadays*

**Dónal Hassett** (Bristol): *In search of hidden memories: Algerians and the First World War*

**Tamara Turner** (Max Planck, Berlin): *The Algerian Bilāliyya ritual, dīwān, as an affective 'site' of memory*

### 5.00pm - 5.15pm

coffee

### 5.15pm - 6.30pm

KEYNOTE LECTURE - The colonial fracture in France from Papon to Macron

**Robert Gildea** (Worcester, Oxford)

Chair: **Hartmut Mayer** (Director Europaeum and St Antony's, Oxford)

Discussant: **Ruth Harris** (All Souls, Oxford)

### 6.30pm

Drinks reception

Garden of the European Studies Centre

### 8.00pm

Dinner for invited speakers

Old Common Room, Balliol College

# PROGRAMME

## Tuesday, 29 May

Maison Française d'Oxford | 2-10 Norham Rd, Oxford OX2 6SE

**9.00am - 9.15am**

coffee

**9.15am - 10.45am**

THE VISUAL ECONOMY OF ALGERIA AND FRANCE

Chair: **Paul Betts** (St Antony's, Oxford)

**Joseph McGonagle** (Manchester): *France as palimpsest: Mapping Algeria in Leïla Sebbar's Mes Algéries en France (2004), Journal de mes Algéries en France (2005) and Voyage en Algérie autour de ma chambre (2008)*

**Tramor Quemeneur** (Paris): *Comics and post-memories of the Algerian War: The case of the 'pieds noirs'*

**Fanny Gillet-Ouhenia** (Genève): *On realism of the archives: Contemporary Algerian artists confronting history*

**10.45am - 11.00am**

coffee

**11.00am - 12.30pm**

MULTIDIRECTIONAL MEMORIES 2

Chair: **Michael Willis** (St Antony's, Oxford)

**Karim Ouaras** (CEMA, Oran): *The battle of walls. Algiers, 1961-1962*

**Abderrahmane Moussaoui** (LADEC, Lyon): *The ever-present War of Liberation (in French)*

**Andrea Brazzoduro** (St Antony's, Oxford): *'Révolution' in the Aurès. Memories, belongings and imagined communities of three Algerian generations, 1954-2018*

**12.30pm - 1.30pm**

SPECIAL SESSION - Generation independence: The sovereignty of the skies (1967) & The long history of a short-lived statue (1970)

**Natalya Vince** (IHTP, Paris & Portsmouth)

Chair: **Andrea Brazzoduro** (St Antony's, Oxford)

**1.30pm**

LUNCH AND CLOSE

# ABSTRACTS

## Monday, 28 May

European Studies Centre, St Antony's College | 70 Woodstock Rd, Oxford OX2 6HR

1.40pm - 3.10pm

MULTIDIRECTIONAL MEMORIES 1

Gendering Pied-Noir memories of the War of Independence

**Claire Eldridge** (Leeds)

In the five decades since Algerian independence much has been written about the histories, identities, memories, and experiences of the European settlers of this former colonial territory. The majority of this output has been generated by pieds-noirs now residing in France and channeled through the associations that form the bedrock of the community's longstanding political and cultural mobilisation.

Representations of the past offered by pieds-noirs have typically elided differences between members of settler community, whether in terms of gender, class, religion, cultural heritage, or political affiliations. Downplaying diversity in both the colonial and postcolonial eras in favour of representations centred on homogeneity and unity has been a deliberate strategy designed to strengthen the lobbying position of pied-noir associations as they pursued recognition and recompense from the French state. Yet this flattening has also been mirrored in academic research, which has primarily focused on public, externally directed actions and narratives rather than on the internal composition and complexities of the pied-noir community.

Seeking to restore some of that detail, this paper will consider the roles played by female pied-noir activists within associations where they have served as both ancillaries and leaders. It will explore the kinds of narratives they have employed to frame the past and to legitimate their activism in the present; the nature of the campaigns they have both supported and directed; as well as the relationships they have forged with other female activists within and beyond their own community.

In addition to highlighting the distinct contribution made by women to the collective memory and mobilization of the pied-noir community, this paper will reflect on the extent to which we can speak of a distinctive female voice within pied-noir activism and the broader implications of this for the ways in which memories are worked through by specific individuals and groups.

**Claire Eldridge** is Associate Professor of Modern European History. Her research explores the interplay between empire, memory and migration in the context of the historical relationship between France and Algeria. Her publications include *From Empire to Exile: History and Memory within the Pied-Noir and Harki Communities, 1962-2012* (Manchester University Press, 2016) and *Algeria Revisited: History, Memory, Identity* (Bloomsbury, 2017) which she co-edited with Rabah Aissaoui. Her latest research explores the histories of European 'settler soldiers' from Algeria who served in the French Army during the First World War.

Contact: [c.eldridge@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:c.eldridge@leeds.ac.uk)

On colonial legacies: An Algerian obsession in police practices, immigration policies and laws on citizenship (c. 1960-2010)

**Emmanuel Blanchard** (Versailles)

In July 1962, the independence of Algeria did not put an end to the Franco-Algerian wars. From this date to the present, wars of memories have framed diplomatic relations and played a big part in every issue intertwined with this colonial past. But all the legacies of the Algerian were are not controversial. High-ranking civil servants have impelled some of them without public debates. Some others became public problems through the demonstrations and the claims of Algerians descendants in the early 80s. From almost twenty years, the postcolonial turn put new lights on these legacies even if few policies and administrative practices are currently directly connected with this colonial past.

Through the cases of police practices, immigration policies and the reforms of laws on citizenship, this paper is an attempt to propose a history of colonial legacies grounded in the ways French bureaucrats tackled an unexpected and unwanted trend: the number of Algerian immigrants rose after 1962 and the independence of Algeria made visible some new intertwined links between France and Algeria.

**Emmanuel Blanchard** is Senior Lecturer in political science. He is also a researcher for the Centre of Sociological Research on Law and Criminal Justice (CESDIP-CNRS). He extensively published about migration from Algeria to France, about colonial violence and about police practices against migrants and foreigners. For two years, he turned his main research interests from repression by State agencies to the claims, requests, petitions and supplications addressed to the colonial authorities from the local level to the head of the state. He is deputy editor of *Crime, History & Societies*, a journal supported by the International Association for the History of Crime and Criminal Justice. His recent publications include: *Histoire de l'immigration algérienne* (La Découverte, 2018); and with Marieke Bloembergen and Amandine Lauro, eds., *Policing Empires. Social Control, Political Transition, Postcolonial Legacies* (Peter Lang, 2017); *La police parisienne et les Algériens, 1944-1962* (Nouveau Monde, 2011; Algerian trans., Casbah, 2013).

Contact: [blanchard@cesdip.fr](mailto:blanchard@cesdip.fr)

*Sans Frontière* and dissident memories of Algeria, 1979-1986

**Daniel A. Gordon** (Edge Hill)

It is now well established that the magazine *Sans Frontière*, advertised as France's first widely-circulated newspaper for immigrants by immigrants, was an important intervention in early 1980s France. The key personnel involved in *Sans Frontière* were veterans of the first generation immigrant worker struggles of the period after 1968, such as the Mouvement des travailleurs arabes and the first sans-papiers movement of 1972-1973, and would go on to play crucial roles in later cultural initiatives such as the immigrant history association Génériques and the founding of the Cité nationale de l'histoire de l'immigration – making *Sans Frontière* an important vector of minority memories from past to future.

But what was the role played specifically by the history of the Algerian war of independence in this memory transmission? This paper will use *Sans Frontière*, and in particular its regular life history feature *Mémoire Immigré/Mémoire du Peuple*, to shed light on this and related questions. Since many of the leading founders of *Sans Frontière* were Tunisian or Moroccan, did specifically Algerian memories play a more marginal role than might be supposed? And which Algerian memories were highlighted? What historical line did *Sans Frontière* take in relation to then emerging revisionist narratives of the Franco-Algerian conflict such as those by Mohammed Harbi, those concerning the followers of Messali Hadj, or those regarding the role of women in the war, that questioned different aspects of official FLN nationalist history? To what extent did *Sans Frontière* succeed in creating a transnational dissident space for circulating and debating marginalised or multidirectional memories of the conflict?

**Daniel A. Gordon** is Senior Lecturer in European History, a member of the Editorial Board of *Modern and Contemporary France* and a former Alistair Horne Visiting Fellow at St Antony's College, Oxford. His recent publications include 'Antisemitism, Islamophobia and the Search for Common Ground in French Antiracist Movements Since 1898', in James Renton and Ben Gidley, eds, *Antisemitism and Islamophobia in Europe* (Palgrave, 2017), pp. 217-266; 'Le 17 octobre 1961 et la population française: la collaboration ou la résistance?' in Aïssa Kadri, Moula Bouaziz and Tramor Quemeneur, eds, *La guerre d'Algérie revisitée* (Karthala, 2015), pp. 339-350; 'From Militancy to History: *Sans Frontière* and Immigrant Memory at the Dawn of the 1980s' in Emile Chabal, ed, *France since the 1970s* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), pp. 115-128; 'Sans Frontière et Race Today, vecteurs parallèles de l'héritage de l'immigration', in Louisa Zanoun, ed, *Le patrimoine de l'immigration en France et en Europe*, special issue of *Migrance* (Hors série 2013), pp. 43-56.

Contact: [gordond@edgehill.ac.uk](mailto:gordond@edgehill.ac.uk)

Chair: **Natalya Vince** (IHTP, Paris & Portsmouth)

**Natalya Vince** is Reader in North African and French Studies. She currently holds a European Commission H2020 Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions Global Fellowship (2016-19), based at the University of Algiers, the University of Portsmouth and the Institut d'histoire du temps présent (CNRS), awarded for the project 'Students, social change and the construction of the post-independence Algerian state' (705763/STUSOCSTA). She is the author of *Our Fighting Sisters: Nation, Memory and Gender in Algeria 1954-2012* (Manchester University Press, 2015), winner of the 2016 Women's History Network Book Prize.

Contact: [natalya.vince@port.ac.uk](mailto:natalya.vince@port.ac.uk)

**3.30pm - 5.00pm**

**SITES/VECTORS OF MEMORY**

Uses of Frantz Fanon in Algeria from 1962 to nowadays

**Emmanuel Alcaraz** (IRMC, Tunis)

The object of this research is uses of Frantz Fanon in Algeria, but also in Tunisia developing a comparative approach from four cases studies: Blida where Fanon was a psychiatrist at the hospital in colonial times before joining the National Liberation Front, Tunis where he was committed for the Algerian cause working at the hospital Charles Nicolle and looking after the wounded soldiers and the Algerian refugees, he was also journalist for *al moudjahid*, the NLF's paper and an ambassador in Subsaharian countries for the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic, Aïn Kerma in Algeria where is Fanon's grave and Algiers where his figure was evoked within museums in Riadh El Feth.

This work was led with interviews, observations and with field archives. It is a question of knowing if the reappropriation made by the Algerian society of Frantz Fanon's memory involves an a posteriori rebuilding of his work by associating him only with a culture of revolutionary war which was served to legitimize the Algerian nationalist project after 1962 but also the Algerian diplomacy in Sub-saharian Africa after 1962.

Indeed, in times where Algiers was Mecca of revolution, Fanon could be used like an intellectual reference for the Algerian government policy which supported subsaharian national liberation movements in Guinée Bissau, in Angola, in Mozambique and towards National African Congress. Rediscovering Fanon today in Algeria is a necessity in a country concerned by subsaharian migrants coming from Sahel, which generate questions about condition of black people within the postcolonial Algerian society in the lights of Frantz Fanon's work. Moreover, Fanon's thought is mainly a theory of political, economic, social and individual liberation, which is rediscovered after the Arab spring in 2011 and which represents a danger for Arab counter-revolution represented by military forces and islamists.

**Emmanuel Alcaraz** is a historian of memories. He is an associate at the University of Paris-Nanterre and at IRMC (Institute of Research on Contemporary Maghreb) in Tunis. He works for AEFÉ in Tunisia (Agency for French Education) in Tunis. He published a book (*Realms of memory of the Algerian war for Independence*, Karthala, 2017) and several articles dealing with the history of Algeria.

Contact: [emmanuelalcaraz123vivalgerie@gmail.com](mailto:emmanuelalcaraz123vivalgerie@gmail.com)

### In search of hidden memories: Algerians and the First World War

**Dónal Hassett** (Bristol)

In his seminal text 'Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning', cultural historian Jay Winter identifies the First World War as the moment that 'brought the search for an appropriate language of loss to the centre of cultural and political life'. While Winter and many of the scholars who have followed him have extensively studied the resulting intersection between public and private commemorative practices in Europe and the White Dominions, the history of postwar mourning in colonial contexts has received much less attention.

This paper traces the intersection of public and private grief in the context of colonial Algeria. It considers how both the structure of rule in colonial society and the practices of colonial historians have combined to prioritise the public politics of commemoration over the personal experiences of grief in analyses of the legacies of the war in Algeria.

By examining the power dynamics that shaped the nascent culture of commemoration in colonial Algeria, it explains how the personal experiences of Algerian victims of war and their family were sacrificed on the altar of the political expediency by the partisans, the critics and the fierce opponents of colonial rule in Algeria. It suggests at least one way in which we might be able to recover some, albeit highly mediated, narratives of the personal struggles of those who lived through the war. Finally, it asks what lessons the story of post-Great War memory in Algeria might hold for those studying the legacies of the other conflicts that have shaped the country's history?

**Dónal Hassett** is Lecturer in French Political and Cultural History. He received his PhD from the European University Institute in Florence in June 2016. Originally from Ireland, he holds a Non-Foundation Scholarship at Trinity College Dublin. He has published widely on the legacies of the Great War in the French Empire. His monograph, *Mobilising Memory: The Great War and the Language of Politics in Colonial Algeria, 1918-1939*, is currently under contract with Oxford University Press and is due to be published next year.

Contact: donal.hassett@bristol.ac.uk

### The Algerian Bilaliyya ritual, dīwān, as an affective 'site' of memory

**Tamara Turner**, Max Planck (Berlin)

Moqedm Jalūl Motam of the main Bilāliyya zāwīya in Saida said in a 2013 interview, 'With the independence of Algeria, dīwān vanished'--'Rahū!' Many other ritual experts echo this sentiment, citing the post-Independence displacement and destruction of the villages nègres or grāba, particularly in towns like Saida and Mascara, where such changes are said to have had a dramatic impact on the cohesion of communities.

While today dīwān rituals are still widely and regularly practiced in Algeria and while the dīwān 'tradition' is attracting more general interest, the popular discourse of disappearance and loss is, I will argue, much more than a nostalgic speech act from the older generations about this historical moment. Rather, the history of dīwān itself is one of displacement, loss, trauma, and rupture and its ritual enacts this.

Dīwān developed out of the trans-Saharan slave trade, primarily during the Ottoman period, and has always enfolded complications of memory and forgetting. Dīwān rituals, typically six to nine hours long, are structured by dozens of song suites that recount histories and personages of saints, the Prophet, the Sohāba, and ancestral sub-Saharan personalities, most often of Hausa origins. Quite importantly, these song-stories are embodied through the trance that the music precipitates. Especially in these latter songs, dīwān ritually performs shards of memory that coalesce through ritual objects, scents, texts, and a particular musical 'Hausa groove'.

With this background in mind, and drawing from extensive anthropological fieldwork as well as anthropological literature on trauma, suffering, and ritual, this paper asks how these dynamics of ancestral memory and rupture negotiate the place of dīwān in post-Independence Algeria. How did post-Independence shifts in social mobility and identity affect ūlād dīwān and can ritual speak to the further displacement of ūlād dīwān after Independence?

**Tamara Turner** is a music anthropologist and research fellow at the Max Planck Institute, Center for the History of Emotions, based in Berlin. Her speciality is North African popular Islam, trance rituals, and affect studies with supporting areas in philosophy of consciousness and the Medical Humanities. Her doctoral thesis was the first research to thoroughly document the musical repertoire, practice, and history of Algerian diwan a ritual practice of the Bilaliyya Order. As a musician, she studied with ritual experts, attended and documented rituals across Algeria cataloguing the repertoire, and is now in the process of publishing her work. Her research in Algeria and Morocco has been funded by the Max Planck Institute, King's College London, the British Forum for Ethnomusicology, the Centre d'Etudes Maghrebines en Algerie (CEMA), and the West African Research Association.

Contact: turner@mpib-berlin.mpg.de

Chair: **James McDougall** (Trinity, Oxford)

**James McDougall** is Fellow and Tutor in Modern History. His research interests are in Mediterranean, Middle Eastern, African, and modern Islamic history, especially modern and contemporary North Africa; and modern France and the French colonial empire (18th-20th cents.). His first work focused on the intersection of Islamic modernism and nationalist politics in colonial Algeria, and he continues to work on colonial and contemporary North African, and especially Algerian, history and politics. He also has a broader interest in the social, political, and intellectual history of the Arab world, and especially in Arabic/Islamic conceptions of history. Since 2008, he has been involved in a series of workshops on Arabic historiography, 'Arabic Pasts', organised in partnership with colleagues at SOAS and the Aga Khan University-Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations, London. His current research is divided between two projects, one on 'the everyday life of colonialism' and the aftereffects of empire in France and Africa, and another on the global history of Islam since the eighteenth century. He is also interested in historical methodology, the intersections of history and critical theory, and comparative historiography. He has been involved in several international research networks, on 'Repression and Control in the Colonial World' (IHTP, Paris), 'Reform and the State in the Muslim Mediterranean, 19th-20th centuries' (IRMC, Tunis), 'Tradition in the Present' (KCL), and 'Reimagining Democracy in the Mediterranean, 1750-1860' (Oxford).

Contact: james.mcdougall@trinity.ox.ac.uk

**5.15pm – 6.30pm**

**KEYNOTE LECTURE – The colonial fracture in France from Papon to Macron**

**Robert Gildea** (Worcester, Oxford)

*La Fracture coloniale*, published in 2005 by the ACHAC research group, argued that memories of the Algerian War in metropolitan France were divided by the colonial experience – constructed in one way by the so-called Français de souche, and in a totally different way by children of immigrants.

This divided memory has been through various phases. Benjamin Stora demonstrated in *La Gangrène et l'oubli* (1991) that down to the period of his writing the trauma of the Algerian War was not so much forgotten as repressed. This was the 'guerre sans nom' whose crimes could not be discussed. Those painful memories were nevertheless played out in different ways: some pied noir and harki children cast them aside by becoming involved in radical movements around 1968, Algerian immigrants supported the PLO, and second-generation immigrants organised the Marche pour l'Égalité in 1983. Any chance of a multicultural society, however, was frustrated by the rise of the Front National and combats over laïcité.

In a second phase, memories of France's use of colonialist force against Algerian immigrants on 17 October 1961 became public in 1991 and were fully exposed in the 1997-8 trial of Maurice Papon. This trial triggered a battle of memories around the Algerian War, especially about torture and massacre. Far from this opening the way to a working through of memory, however, partisans of France's record in Algeria fought back and laws on the veil and on French colonial history were passed in 2004-5. These debates and the colonial realities they exposed deepened the colonial fracture, evidenced by the Indigènes de la République, the banlieue riots of 2005 and the Islamist radicalisation of immigrant youth.

A final part explores the difference made to memory of the Algerian War by Macron's announcement in 2016 that colonialism was a 'crime against humanity'. Did this represent the beginning of a working through of France's colonial past or was it no more than a PR stunt?

**Robert Gildea** is Professor of Modern History. He works on French and European history in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with particular interests in the fall-out from the French Revolution, everyday life and resistance in the Second World War and 1968. He has written on collective memory and political culture in France and directed an international oral history project on Europe's 1968. He is currently directing another international project on transnational approaches to resistance in Europe between the Spanish Civil War and the Cold War (1936-1948) and writing a book called 'Empires of the mind' on successive incarnations of empire in France and Britain from the nineteenth to the twenty-first centuries.

Contact: [robert.gildea@history.ox.ac.uk](mailto:robert.gildea@history.ox.ac.uk)

Chair: **Hartmut Mayer** (Director Europaeum and St Antony's, Oxford)

**Hartmut Mayer** joined the European Studies Centre as Director on 1 September 2017. He has been and will remain a Fellow and Tutor in Politics at St. Peter's College, University of Oxford, where he has been teaching politics and international relations since 1998. Hartmut is seconded to St. Antony's during the time of the ESC Directorship. Hartmut has been involved with the ESC ever since his graduate student days at St. Antony's going back to 1994. Later he served in an advisory capacity and has seen the growth and changes of the Centre for more two decades. Concurrently with the ESC Directorship, Hartmut will also serve as the Acting Director of the EUROPAEUM, a consortium of leading European Universities. In addition, he holds an Adjunct Professorship in European and Eurasian Studies at Johns Hopkins University, SAIS Bologna since 2014.

Contact: [hartmut.mayer@sant.ox.ac.uk](mailto:hartmut.mayer@sant.ox.ac.uk)

Discussant: **Ruth Harris** (All Souls, Oxford)

**Ruth Harris** is Professor of Modern History. Her research centres on the history of Modern Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. She focuses especially on France, writing interdisciplinary cultural history that combines the history of religion and gender, as well as medicine and science. She began by examining the emergence of the 'insanity defence' in Paris when work on unconscious mental activity and criminal anthropology shook the foundations of legal responsibility. She then moved to exploring Catholic revivalism and healing, especially at the shrine at Lourdes. Her third work was a study of the Dreyfus Affair which explored what distinguished a cause célèbre from conventional politics, and analysed the politics of commitment. This work was awarded the Wolfson Prize in 2010. Her published work on these subjects include *The Man on Devil's Island: Alfred Dreyfus and the Affair that Divided France* (Harmondsworth, 2010), *Lourdes: Body and Spirit in the Secular Age* (1998) and *Murders and Madness: Medicine, Law and Psychiatry* (Oxford, 1989). Since then, she has begun a large project on religious revival which focuses on the links between South Asia and the West. She has published on Gandhi and Romain Rolland; is analysing the Indian origins of Albert Schweitzer's 'reverence for life,' and is undertaking new work on Anagarika Dharmapala, Vivekananda and their relationship to Western thought.

Contact: [ruth.harris@history.ox.ac.uk](mailto:ruth.harris@history.ox.ac.uk)

# ABSTRACTS

## Tuesday, 29 May

Maison Française d'Oxford | 2-10 Norham Rd, Oxford OX2 6SE

9.15am - 10.45am

THE VISUAL ECONOMY OF ALGERIA AND FRANCE

France as palimpsest: Mapping Algeria in Leïla Sebbar's *Mes Algéries en France* (2004), *Journal de mes Algéries en France* (2005) and *Voyage en Algéries autour de ma chambre* (2008)

**Joseph McGonagle** (University of Manchester)

In the wake of the fortieth anniversary of the end of the Algerian War, the 2000s in France were striking for the proliferation of works across visual culture that sought to probe both the colonial and postcolonial links between France and Algeria. This paper examines a key example: the important trilogy of books by a leading French writer of Algerian heritage, Leïla Sebbar, which weave together an immersive collection of images and text in her exploration of the public and private links that continue to bind both countries together.

Her books *Mes Algéries en France* (2004), *Journal de mes Algéries en France* (2005) and *Voyages en Algéries autour de ma chambre* (2008) constitute Sebbar's most sustained engagement to date with visual culture and her highly personal but also wide-ranging exploration of the legacy of French colonial history arguably provides significant insights into our understanding of the specificities of Franco-Algerian links.

Across these three richly illustrated works, Sebbar probes the diverse connections that continue to join France and Algeria together in the present-day era via the very personal and idiosyncratic journey she undertakes through the shared history of both countries and of her own childhood in Algeria and adult life in France.

This paper will argue that, by shaping a space for a polyphony of voices, testimonies and experiences to be heard, Sebbar's trilogy vividly demonstrates how colonial history has indelibly etched both metropolitan France and French society and how deeply imbricated postcolonial Algeria and France remain.

**Joseph McGonagle** is Senior Lecturer in Cultural Studies in the French-speaking World. He is the author of *Representing Ethnicity in Contemporary French Visual Culture* (Manchester University Press, 2017) and co-author (with Edward Welch) of *Contesting Views: The Visual Economy of France and Algeria* (Liverpool University Press, 2013).

Contact: [Joseph.McGonagle@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:Joseph.McGonagle@manchester.ac.uk)

Comics and post-memories of the Algerian War: The case of the 'pieds noirs'

**Tramor Quemeneur** (Paris)

To present day, about a hundred comics on the colonial Algeria and the Algerian War of decolonisation have been published. Artists such as Cabu, Siné or Wolinski, who rejected colonisation and the war in which they participated, created the first drawings, pages and books during the war itself. At the beginning of the 80s, the first comic book concerning the Algerian War was published by an author who was a former soldier (*Une éducation algérienne* of Guy Vidal and Alain Bignon). The number of comics increased then regularly, especially from the end of the 90s. The collection of the books of Jacques Ferrandez, *Carnets d'Orient*, remains the reference.

Globally, those comics can concern a dramatic and revealing event of the war, as the repression of October 1961 or the one of Charonne in February 1962, or they can also deal with a specific 'memory group' of the Algerian War: the soldiers, the Algerians, the Algerians of the French army (the 'harkis'), the 'pieds noirs' etc...

From the beginning of the 2000s, a new kind of comic has emerged, written not by persons who lived during the Algerian War but by authors born after it. Those authors told the life of their parents or grandparents in colonial Algeria and the war, what the researcher Marianne Hirsch called 'post-memory'.

Sons of 'pieds noirs' constitute the most important group of those authors. What are those comic books and who are their authors? What kind of post-memory do they tell about? I will show that those authors frequently go back on their familial scars, with the will to cicatrize a painful and contentious memory.

**Tramor Quemeneur** is a member of the Orientation Council of the National Museum of History of Immigration (Paris) and president of the Scientific Council of the National Space on Algerian War (ENGA). He is lecturer in the Master 'Mediterranean Maghreb Europe' in University Paris 8. He codirected the book *La guerre d'Algérie revisitée. Nouvelles recherches, nouvelles perspectives* (Karthala ed., 2015). He wrote also, with Benjamin Stora, *Mémoires d'Algérie* (Librio ed., 2014), taken from the object book *Algérie 54-62. Lettres, carnets et récits des Français et des Algériens dans la guerre*, (Les Arènes, 2010 and 2012 for the text edition). This book received the Elle Reader Price in 2011 and the France Mutualiste Price in 2012. With Slimane Zeghidour, he published *L'Algérie en couleurs. 1954-1962. Photographies d'appelés pendant la guerre* (Les Arènes, 2011). He also wrote, notably, *La guerre d'Algérie* (Géo ed., 2012) and directed *100 fiches d'histoire du XXe siècle* (Bréal, 2017, 4th ed.). He took part in the writings of several schoolbooks (Hatier ed.) and documentaries. Recently, he prepared and wrote a dossier on the soldiers in the Algerian War for *Historia* (April 2018).

Contact: [tquemeneur@gmail.com](mailto:tquemeneur@gmail.com)

### On realism of the archives: Contemporary Algerian artists confronting history

**Fanny Gillet-Ouhenia** (Genève)

Since the past two decades, Algerian contemporary artists of different generations, itineraries or backgrounds have invested the history of their own country by using different methodologies of research: archive investigations in public institutions and within private frame or interviews with actors and witnesses of relevant events. Those collected information are thereafter featured in artistic apparatus mixing multidisciplinary practices (film, photograph or drawing).

Visual, writing and oral documents thus become sources intended to re-present, identify and testify a part of historical – and sometimes autobiographical – reality. As such, archives are perceived as authentic proofs on which the artists rely to offer alternative narratives in a post-civil war context where legitimacy and its 'glorious history' are challenged by social emergence of individual memories.

In terms of visual culture, integration of documents in artistic works is a mean to question the symbolic operation at stake in the construction of collective imaginary. On the other hand, the search of veracity expressed by and through the seemingly legible and comprehensible nature of documents tends to reconnect with a certain tradition of realism and longstanding debate in art history: what aesthetical form should art take to represent social antagonisms? For placing history at the core of their preoccupation artists are basically signified a form of political responsibility.

Through interviews with the artists and an analysis of their work this communication will problematize the political process of the use of the archive in Algeria.

**Fanny Gillet** is a PhD candidate in Art History. She is working on artistic relationships with history and its political stakes in post-independent Algeria. Founding member of ARVIMM, Research Group on Visual Arts in the Middle East (19th-20th century), Fanny Gillet co-organize the Research Seminar 'Art Histories in the Middle East, 19th-21st Century', Institut d'études de l'Islam et des sociétés du monde musulman (EHESS, Paris). She has lately co-coordinated the issue 'Arts visuels. Contextualiser nos regards' (with Annabelle Boissier, Alain Messaoudi, Perin Yavuz), *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée*, n. 142, 2017. She has published: 'The Persistence of the Image, The Lacunae of History: The Archive and Contemporary Art in Algeria (1992-2012)', *Algeria and Beyond: Culture and Nation 1988-2015, Francophone Postcolonial Studies*, vol. 8, Liverpool University Press, July 2017; 'Rebirths, discontinuities and continuities: Constructing the History of Maghrebi Art' (with Annabelle Boissier), *L'Année du Maghreb*, vol. 10, June 2014.

Contact: fangill@yahoo.fr

### Chair: **Paul Betts** (St Antony's, Oxford)

**Paul Betts** is Professor of Modern European History. His research and publications center on Modern European Cultural History in general and 20th Century German History in particular. He is especially interested in the relationship between culture and politics over the course of the century, and has worked on the themes of material culture, cultural diplomacy, photography, memory and nostalgia, human rights and international justice, death and changing notions of private life. His published work includes the books *Within Walls: Private Life in the German Democratic Republic* (OUP, 2010; paperback, 2012), which was awarded the Fraenkel Prize in Contemporary History by the Wiener Library, and *The Authority of Everyday Objects: A Cultural History of West German Industrial Design* (University of California Press, 2004; paperback, 2007).

Contact: hartmut.mayer@sant.ox.ac.uk

## 11.00am – 12.30pm

### MULTIDIRECTIONAL MEMORIES 2

#### The battle of walls. Algiers, 1961-1962

**Karim Ouaras** (CEMA, Oran)

Focusing on the last years of Algeria's War of Liberation (1954-1962), my paper examines how and why graffiti explode during periods of struggle, social crisis, and unrest. Most graffiti during this period dealt with the colonial and anti-colonial order. Walls in Algiers were 'home' to (counter) revolutionary graffiti and a field of battles between the National Liberation Front (FLN) and the Secret Army Organization (OAS). Since these walls were engaged in struggle with words and signs, which translated claims, protests, and violence into public space, they became a documentation of the revolution and a way of keeping the (counter) nationalist flame burning. Graffiti constitute evidence that a revolution took place, and are one of the most effective, efficient, and original tools for documenting times of crisis, conflict, struggle, and war.

In this presentation, algérois graffiti are approached as a revolutionary narrative helping to address political opinions and memories on the Algerian revolution. For example, the political slogans 'Algerian Algeria' claimed by the FLN and the 'French Algeria' claimed by the OAS were followed with intensive graffiti writings in public sphere in 1961-1962. The inscriptions conceived by the OAS covered the walls and even the roadways of Algiers as soon as this organization was created in 1961. Graffiti writings were used by the militants of 'French Algeria' to spread their ideology and propaganda among the European populations living in Algeria at that time. Graffiti writings were also vital for the militants of the Algerian Algeria claimed by the FLN, as a means of resistance and rebellion against the colonial order.

The aim of this paper is to show the ways in which graffiti were related to key traumatic events that have occurred in contemporary Algeria, specifically the Algerian War of Liberation. It explores OAS and FLN graffiti at the end of the Algeria War of Liberation, and the role they played against or in favour of the Algerian revolution. My attempt is to understand what is involved in graffiti writings and go beyond the words and signs.

**Karim Ouaras** graduated with a Doctorate in Sociolinguistics at the University of Oran, Algeria. He currently teaches sociolinguistics, Semiotics, (Critical) Discourse Analysis, Languages in Contact, and Social Research Methods at the Department of French

Language, University of Mostaganem, Algeria. His research interests focus on Graffiti and Public Space in Algeria; Sociolinguistics; Language, Identity and Nation-State in the Maghrib; Berber Languages; Language Planning and Legislation; Multilingualism and Language Contact in the Maghrib. He is also an associate researcher at the Centre de Recherche en Anthropologie Sociale et Culturelle, and the Associate Director of the Centre d'Études Maghrébines en Algérie.

Contact: ouaras@cema-northafrica.org

### The ever-present War of Liberation (in French)

**Abderrahmane Moussaoui** (Lyon)

The memory of the War of Liberation, 'the revolution' as we will call it here in Algeria, is part of the collective imaginary because it is not a symbolic capital exclusively in the hands of those who hold power. The latter are not the only ones authorised to use the War of Liberation as a source of legitimisation: their opponents equally make claims on it. The sacralisation of the war is such that, more than half a century after it began, passions run high at the first suggestion that the event might be analysed beyond an ideological perspective. The war is 'revolution' which was unprecedented and remains unsurpassable.

In the confrontation between the regime and its Islamist opponents, both accuse the other of being harkis, or the stooges of France, whilst glorifying themselves as the true descendants of the martyrs who died in the struggle to liberate Algeria. The war is present everywhere. The primary reference, the founding reference is this sacralised place/moment which is the War of Liberation.

The war is so present in discourse and political practice that it is constantly referred to in explanations of tragic current affairs. It is the classificatory paradigm which authorises the person who uses it to glorify him or herself and discredit and denounce anyone whose discourse, intentions and practices are considered to be in contradiction with this monumental referent.

Those in power, in the same way as their opponents, consider themselves the best defenders of a land wrenched from colonial rule at a very high cost, and believe that they can detect, in an almost obsessional way, the signs of a presence or a return of colonialism in new forms.

**Abderrahmane Moussaoui** taught at the University of Oran before joining, in 2000, the Department of Anthropology of the University of Provence, which he directed from 2005 to 2007. Since 2012, he has been Professor of Anthropology at the University of Lyon 2 (UFR anthropology of sociology and political science). The sacredness and holiness, both in Islam and in Catholicism, are among his favorite research topics. He is the author of *Espace et Sacré dans le Sahara algérien* (CNRS, 2002) and *Systèmes hydrauliques traditionnels*, AREA / [barzakh], 2011. He also directed, with F. Adelhah, the special issue of the *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée* 'Mosques, spaces, institutions, practices', n. 125, 2009.

Contact: abderrahmane.moussaoui@univ-lyon2.fr

### 'Révolution' in the Awres. Memories, belongings and imagined communities of three Algerian generations, 1954-2018

**Andrea Brazzoduro** (St Antony's, Oxford)

This paper will present materials from my ongoing fieldwork conducted among the Shawia, the Amazighs (Berbers) from the region of the Awres, in the South East of Algeria.

It will focus on the complex and conflicting relationship between the memories of the war for independence from France and the reference to the Amazigh dimension among three generations of Shawia.

How is the belonging to the Shawia 'imagined community' performed in contemporary Algeria? In order to answer this question, the paper will make a methodological shift, taking advantage of the heuristic potentials of oral history, and therefore considering memory not only as a burden but also as a choice.

Building on ethnography and interviews conducted since 2007, this paper will focus on 'historical imagination' aiming to reconsider memory as both a legacy of the past and as desire – as 'memory of the future'.

**Andrea Brazzoduro** is Deakin Fellow at the European Studies Centre, St Antony's College. He joined Oxford in 2015 as Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow at the Faculty of History and Junior Research Fellow at Trinity College. He is currently working to his new book, which aims to frame a transnational history of the Algerian War of Independence (1954-1962), going beyond both the (opposing) French and Algerian (national) narratives, to resituate the war in its Mediterranean, European, and eventually its global contexts. He is the author of *Soldati senza causa: Memorie della guerra d'Algeria* (Laterza, 2012). His research interests include: decolonization (especially focusing on Twentieth-century France, Algeria, and the Global 1960s), history of representations and social uses of the past (memory studies, oral history, and epistemology), critical theory and postcolonial studies (with a particular focus on the Mediterranean, and the relationships between France, Algeria, and Italy, in the past and in the present).

Contact: andrea.brazzoduro@sant.ox.ac.uk

## 12.30pm - 1.30pm

SPECIAL SESSION – Generation independence: The sovereignty of the skies (1967) & The long history of a short-lived statue (1970)

**Natalya Vince** (IHTP, Paris & Portsmouth)

This session will include the screening of two documentary shorts (c. 20 mins) which are part of a larger project in which men and women from across Algeria talk about the 1960s and 1970s. This period is often absent from discussions of Algerian history and memory, with far more attention paid to the anti-colonial struggle 1954-62 and the civil violence of the 1990s.

Each portrait will explore a moment in which an individual life story intersected with the processes of post-independence state-building – from the construction of monuments, to bringing air traffic control into Algerian hands, to operating energy infrastructure.

Far from the stereotypical image of the Algerian state as a single-party monolith, in which ideas were imposed from above and dissent crushed, these histories “from below” reveal the importance of individual initiatives, the significance of personal and familial networks and the constant negotiation of the limits of what it was and was not possible to say and do.

**Natalya Vince** is Reader in North African and French Studies. She currently holds a European Commission H2020 Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions Global Fellowship (2016-19), based at the University of Algiers, the University of Portsmouth and the Institut d'histoire du temps présent (CNRS), awarded for the project ‘Students, social change and the construction of the post-independence Algerian state’ (705763/STUSOCSTA). She is the author of *Our Fighting Sisters: Nation, Memory and Gender in Algeria 1954-2012* (Manchester University Press, 2015), winner of the 2016 Women’s History Network Book Prize.

Contact: [natalya.vince@port.ac.uk](mailto:natalya.vince@port.ac.uk)

Chair: **Andrea Brazzoduro** (St Antony’s, Oxford)

**Andrea Brazzoduro** is Deakin Fellow at the European Studies Centre, St Antony’s College. He joined Oxford in 2015 as Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow at the Faculty of History and Junior Research Fellow at Trinity College. He is currently working to his new book, which aims to frame a transnational history of the Algerian War of Independence (1954-1962), going beyond both the (opposing) French and Algerian (national) narratives, to resituate the war in its Mediterranean, European, and eventually its global contexts. He is the author of *Soldati senza causa: Memorie della guerra d’Algeria* (Laterza, 2012). His research interests include: decolonization (especially focusing on Twentieth-century France, Algeria, and the Global 1960s), history of representations and social uses of the past (memory studies, oral history, and epistemology), critical theory and postcolonial studies (with a particular focus on the Mediterranean, and the relationships between France, Algeria, and Italy, in the past and in the present).

Contact: [andrea.brazzoduro@sant.ox.ac.uk](mailto:andrea.brazzoduro@sant.ox.ac.uk)

## FREE EVENT OPEN TO ALL

[www.francealgeriaconference2018.com](http://www.francealgeriaconference2018.com)

To secure your place, please email: [european.studies@sant.ox.ac.uk](mailto:european.studies@sant.ox.ac.uk)

