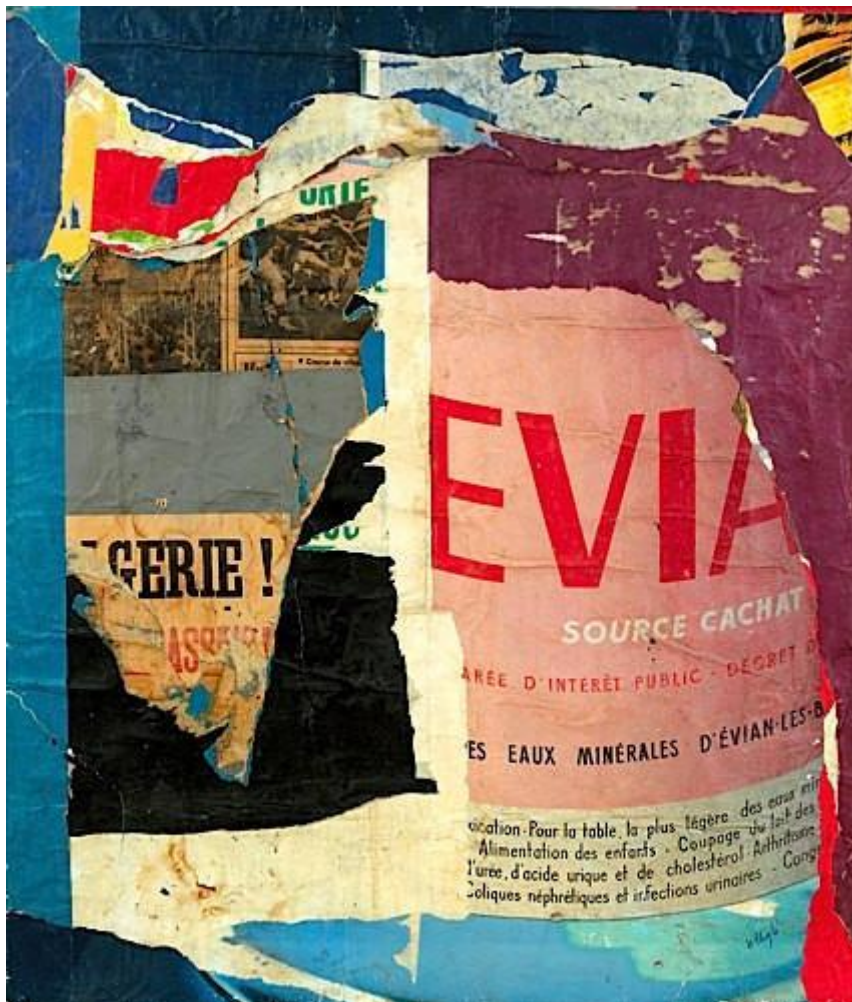


Call for paper

Political Science and the Algerian War

Workshop, Friday, December 15, 2023

Working languages: English and French



Jacques Villeglé, Carrefour-Algérie-Evian, 1961

Organisation :

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Background:

The French colonization of Algeria (1830-1962), the Algerian War of Independence (1954-1962), and the exiles and migrations they engendered, have profoundly influenced the formation of contemporary France. Republican institutions, political families, French capitalism, the country's demographics, culture and even language were partly forged in these historical experiences.

The year 2022 marked the sixtieth anniversary of the end of the Algerian War of Independence and the colonization of Algeria. Parts of French society participated in the commemoration of the end of the conflict. In doing so, these actors produced a certain number of speeches, gestures, or public policies about the past. This time of memory was coupled with a political time that included this anniversary in an election year and ensured a strong presence of colonization and the Algerian War in the media.

The presidential election thus highlighted the way in which the position of the conflict, and more broadly of colonization, was considered by a part of the political class as a partisan marker and an electoral argument. Here, the relationship between the memory of the Algerian War and politics is thought to be a tool of cleavage and clientelism.

A few months earlier, however, historian Benjamin Stora submitted a report to the President of the Republic entitled *Les questions mémorielles portant sur la colonisation et la guerre d'Algérie* with the ambition of moving towards "reconciliation". Here, the evocation of the past is presented as a public policy tool that allows for the reestablishment of social ties, within French society as well as between Algeria and France, beyond conflicts and cliques. This report also follows the implementation of several memory programs – mostly in the educational field - intended to promote dialogue and coexistence between citizens, while family histories linked to the conflict and colonization are considered to be divisive factors that hinder social cohesion.

Between tools of conflictualization and instruments of reconciliation, the relationship between politics and the memory of the Algerian War and colonization has not been systematically studied yet and, even more, the effects of these discourses, commissions, and tools have never been scientifically looked at and assessed. The debates and analyses - as well as their very qualifications - of these phenomena are most often dominated by media commentators and the political actors themselves.

Of course, and this is infinitely desirable, historians have offered inspiring and most needed analysis of these uses of the past, based on their knowledge and their work. The starting point of this study day is that we believe it is essential that they be joined by anthropologists, political scientists and sociologists, some of whom have indeed begun to study, empirically and in contemporary society, the question of the

relationship between the memory of colonization and the Algerian War and politics, whether this last term is understood in its different meanings, from policy to politics, passing by polity.

This workshop aims first of all to allow the elaboration of a cumulative knowledge on these questions, far from the normative considerations that most often preside over their treatment in the public debate. By mobilizing social sciences and their methodologies - from ethnography to questionnaires -, it bets on the production of a scientific knowledge about the socio-political effects of these historical experiences on French political life and contemporary French society.

Finally, this workshop has a last objective. Through a close examination of the contemporary political effects of the memory of colonization and the Algerian War, but in a diachronic perspective, it intends to offer a practical case to allow French research to participate in the critical re-reading, currently underway in the international field of memory studies, of many of the old evidences on the place and the expected effects of the evocation of violent pasts in contemporary societies.

In doing so, this workshop wishes to :

- Anchor the study of colonization and the Algerian War and their memories in the field of political science.
- Promote the study of memory policies in the field of public policy analysis
- Bring together researchers on a transdisciplinary and international scale
- Using the questions below, it will return to old works such as those of Annick Percheron on the politicization of a generation during the Algerian War or the surveys by questionnaires and polls conducted since the 1960s on the "relationship" of the French to the Algerian War.
- Identify the investigations that remain to be carried out and build a collective dynamic to carry them out.

Submissions may include, but are not limited to, the following questions:

- The Algerian War and politics: what chronological boundaries between 1830 and 2023? How do events related to colonisation and the Algerian War trigger political processes in France?
- Is the memory of the Algerian war and/or that of colonialism a determinant of the positioning of actors on the political scene?
- Are the speeches and actions of politicians with regard to the memory of the Algerian war and/or that of colonialism determinants of the vote?
- On what territorial scales - between the local and the international - should we study the relationship between political life and the memory of the Algerian War and colonization?
- How can we grasp the evolution of the relationship between the memory of colonization and the Algerian war and politics over time?
- What role(s) does the memory of the Algerian War and colonization play in social mobilizations and activists careers?
- How are issues related to the memory of the Algerian War and colonization put on the agenda?

- What are the instruments of the policies of memory (teaching, reparations, commemorations, etc.) and how can we identify their social and political effects?
- What are the categories of public intervention produced by the memorial policies of the Algerian War and colonization?
- Who are the experts on the politics of the memory of the Algerian War and colonization?
- Which administrations are in charge of the public policies in question?
- Who are the social actors involved in the memorial issues related to the Algerian War and colonization and their evolution?
- Who are the target audiences of these policies?
- How do we measure the impact of these policies, between *policies* and *politics*?
- Between politicization and depoliticization, who is finally interested in the memory of the Algerian War and colonization, in France and elsewhere?

Submissions

Submissions must be sent, in French or English, **before June 1st 2023**. They should be two pages long and should specify the problematic, the methodology, the data, material or archives used and the main conclusions as well as a presentation of about ten lines of the researcher(s). A response will be given at the beginning of July 2023.

For the selected proposals, the texts, which can be written in either French or English, must be sent by November 6, 2023 in order to allow an advance reading by all participants.

The workshop should be held on Friday, December 15, 2023 at Sciences Po, Paris. In case of a huge number of quality submissions the organizers may consider organizing a second day for the workshop.

A publication in an international peer-reviewed journal is immediately envisaged.

Scientific Advisory Board:

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