Shared traumas: France and Algeria since 1830

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This course aims to contextualise the troubled history of modern Algeria through its relationship with France. Students will examine ways that the legacy of colonisation and memories of its reversal have continued to haunt both countries and their respective trajectories. Between 1830 and 1962, Algeria was no mere colony; it was legally and administratively part of France. Yet, after the Algerian War of Independence, Algeria suddenly became 'foreign'; its eight million Algerian citizens were deprived of French citizenship and hundreds of thousands of French settlers were forced to leave for a France that had never been home. The course traces Franco-Algerian relations through colonisation and two world wars. It pays particular attention to the Algerian War of independence assessing the reasons for the brutality inherent in the conflict and the ways its victims and memories continue to impact upon both countries. The course also looks at the extent to which the two countries have influenced each other since independence, particularly during the progression of the extreme right in France, the Algerian civil war of the 1990s, the rise of Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and through immigration, socio-economic change and the politics of memory. Students will consider a variety of historical approaches to the period including post-colonial and memory studies, assessing the reasons why histories of this period have proved to be so controversial. This module will also encourage students to investigate primary sources that can provide insights into the period including memoirs, diaries, films and novels.

Essential reading:
Martin Evans, Algeria. France's undeclared War (2012).
Algerians, state terror and memory (2007).

Films:
The Battle of Algiers (1966).
Caché (2005).
Indigènes (2006)