

Paris 1961: Algerians, State Terror, and Memory

Jim House, Neil MacMaster



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The massacre of Algerian demonstrators by the Paris police on the night of 17 October 1961 is one of the most contested events in contemporary French history. This book provides a multi-layered investigation of the repression through a critical examination of newly opened archives, oral sources, the press and contemporary political movements and debates. The roots of violence are traced back to counter-insurgency techniques developed by the French military in North Africa and introduced into Paris to crush the independence movement among Algerian migrant workers. The study shows how and why this event was rapidly expunged from public visibility in France, but was kept alive by immigrant and militant minorities, to resurface in a dramatic form after the 1980s. Through this case-study the authors explore both the dynamics of state terror as well as the complex memorial processes by which these events continue to inform and shape post-colonial society.

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