Study Center in Rabat, Morocco

Course name: Contemporary Moroccan Society and Culture
Course number: AFST 3001 MORC
Programs offering course: Moroccan Studies
Language of instruction: English
U.S. Semester Credits: 3
Contact Hours: 45
Term: Summer MS 2018

Course Description

This class is an opportunity to engage critically with all aspects of your experience studying in Morocco, and further your understanding of various issues in Moroccan culture and society. The texts and topics we will address include language, history, economics, literature, religion, arts, politics, and gender issues. We will take into account the heterogeneity of Moroccan society, and keep in mind the country’s connection to its broader geographical context. We will aim at viewing Morocco from both a local and regional standpoints while simultaneously relating it to your own perspectives. This comparative approach will serve to identify the dynamics of Moroccan culture’s major patterns and what drives the behavior, attitudes, values and judgments of Moroccans.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, the students will have developed the ability:
- To understand the factors contributing to shaping a Moroccan identity;
- To discuss major issues of contemporary Moroccan society, culture and history;
- To identify the various aspects of transformation of Morocco since independence.

Course Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Methods of Instruction

The class will be conducted in the form of a seminar. Lectures will provide background and set discussion frameworks. Student participation will form the backbone of the class. As such, students will be expected to prepare alone or with another student a brief (20 min) lecture on one of the secondary readings. Opportunities are listed along with the class topic. A set of field trips and visits to museums, historical sites and social and political organizations is programmed by CIEE, and are CRUCIAL to understanding the issues covered in the syllabus.
Assessment and Final Grade

1. Reaction Papers – 25% (each 12.5%)
2. Presentations on Secondary Readings – 20%
3. Final Research Paper – 25%
4. Attendance and Class Participation – 30%

Course Requirements

1. Reaction Papers
   Each student will write a 1-2 page reaction paper on two experiences in Morocco that are an important part of many Moroccan’s ordinary lives. The first will be an anthropological analysis of riding the tram lines. The second will be to compare café/restaurants in Place Moulay Hassan (Place Pietri) and the Medina. The first will be due at the end of the 4th full week of class. The second will be due at the end of the 8th week of class.

2. Presentations on Secondary Readings
   For one, and possibly more, readings per week, you will have an opportunity to introduce the material to your classmates. Outlining the material; giving pertinent context of the author and the story; and relating the material to class so far will earn full credit.

3. Final Research Paper
   Details to be decided by class on first day.

4. Attendance and Class Participation
   Credit is awarded on the basis of regular, active participation and attendance in class discussion and activities. You must read the assigned material in advance to actively participate in class discussion.
   
   Attendance Policy for CIEE Rabat Study Center courses
   If you are absent from class, you will receive a “0” for that day’s attendance and participation.
   Please inform your instructor AND CIEE staff by email if you are going to be absent as soon as possible before--not after--the class you will miss.

   Tardiness Policy for CIEE Rabat Study Center courses
   Arriving late to class is disruptive so it is expected that you are in class and ready to start work when class time begins. Participation points will be deducted for tardiness. If you arrive more than 20 minutes late for class you will receive a “0” for that day’s class participation and it will count as an absence in applying the absence policy.

Field Trips, Site Visits, Guest Lecturers
   Please note that this class includes attending ad hoc events related to the main objectives of the course, as well as field trips (details will be provided), which are not optional but an integral part of the course.
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<tr>
<th>Session One</th>
<th>Introductions</th>
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<td>General Introduction: course contents, objectives, and expectations</td>
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<td>• Historical time-line</td>
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<td>• Moroccan Dynasties</td>
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<td>• Islam in Morocco</td>
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<td>• Screening of a documentary on the history of Morocco</td>
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<tr>
<th>Session Two</th>
<th>“Language, Multilingualism, and Cultural Diversity in Morocco”</th>
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<td>Readings include: “Languages: Conflicts or Co-existence?”</td>
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<td>Fouad Laroui’s “The Curse of the Moroccan Writer”</td>
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<th>Session Three</th>
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<td>• Trip to IRCAM (To be arranged)</td>
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<td>• Article: “Amazigh singer Idir and Resistance through Song.”</td>
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<td>(Student’s presentation opportunity: the Multilingual Ideal and Politico-ideological Impediments)</td>
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<th>Session Four</th>
<th>“Moroccan Cuisine and Traditional Dress: understanding the Semiotic Structures of these Cultural Practices”</th>
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<td>- Screening of a documentary about Moroccan Cuisine</td>
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<td>- The Tea-making Ritual as a Signifying Practice</td>
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<th>Session Five</th>
<th>“The Protectorate: Colonial politics, and colonial Administration (achievements and failures)”</th>
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<td>(Presentation opportunity: the Construction of the Oriental Other in French Colonial Discourse about Morocco).</td>
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<td>- Screening of a historical documentary</td>
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<th>Session Six</th>
<th>“Nationalist Movements and Armed Resistance”</th>
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<td>Historical documents considered and compared with fictional accounts</td>
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<td>Excerpts from Year of the Elephant by Leila Abouzeid and Fatema El-Mernissi’s Dreams of Trespass</td>
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<td>(Presentation opportunity: Mohammed V’s Tangiers’ Speech and the Revival of Nationalism)</td>
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<th>Session Seven</th>
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<td>Song and Story Telling</td>
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<td>Readings include: Moroccan Folktales and excerpts from Sidi Abderrahmane El-Mejdhub’s quatrains.</td>
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<td>Session</td>
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| Eight     | Religion and World-view  
Article: “Saints and Spirits and their Significance in Moroccan Cultural Beliefs and Practices”  
Excerpts from Tahar Benjelloun’s The Sand Child  
Religion as reflected in some Moroccan Folktales  
(Presentation opportunity: Can Morocco retain its Religious Identity and still be Democratic?) |
| Nine      | “Music and dance in Morocco”  
Case study (1): Nass Al-Giwan: Entertainment and Social Commitment  
Case study (2): Finaire: blending Authenticity and Modernity  
Case study (3): Gnawa: Global Trance and Therapy |
| Ten       | Post-independence: the end of euphoria and adjustment difficulties (constitutional monarchy; political parties, the intelligencia, struggle for power; multiparty vs. one party options)  
Resistance in the poetry of Abdellatif Laabi  
(Presentation opportunity: on the Roles of Intellectuals in Post-independence Morocco) |
| Eleven    | “Intellectuals and Power: the Years of Lead Sky”  
Excerpts from prison narratives: Tahar Benjelloun’s The Blinding Absence of Light  
Screening of La Chambre Noir  
Resistance in the poetry of Abdellatif Laabi  
(Presentation opportunity: on the Roles of Intellectuals in Post-independence Morocco) |
| Twelve    | “Migration, Illegal Immigration, and Diaspora Culture.”  
Readings: Youssef Amine El-Alami’s Sea Drinkards  
Fouad Laroui, “Van Gogh’s Shoes” |
| Thirteen  | “The Monarchy of Mohammed VI”: Transition towards democracy and the rule of law: hopes and impediments  
Amendment of the Constitution  
The National Human Development Initiative |
| Fourteen  | Article: “Gender Role, Marriage, and Family in Morocco”  
The Reformation of Mudawwanah (or, the Family Code), a documentary  
Screening the film: Femmes et Femmes or Rock the Kasbah  
(Presentation opportunity: the Empowerment of Moroccan Woman—Prospects and Challenges) |
| Fifteen   | “Voices from the Margins: Gay and Lesbian Rights”  
Taya’s defense of Gay Rights, Salvation Army |
| Session Sixteen | “Arab Spring and Youth Culture”  
Social Media and Resistance: the *February 20* Movement  
The *Café* culture in Morocco  
Case Study: El-Haked (or, the Resentful One)  
Rap and Resistance |
| Session Seventeen | “Art and Architecture in Morocco”  
Trip to the *Oudayas*, the Old Medina, and the Museum of Contemporary Art  
Screening of a documentary on Moroccan Architecture  
(To what extent is authentic Moroccan Architecture representative of its Diversity?) |
| Session Eighteen | Social challenges: Life in shanties  
Excerpts from Choukri’s *For Bread Alone*  
And Zafzaf’s *The Cockerel’s Egg*  
(Presentation opportunity: Voices from the Margins—Do they really count?) |
| Session Nineteen | Old media and New Media in Morocco  
Trip to ISIC (The National Institute for Journalism and Communication Studies) and meeting with media students  
The Role of Media in Enhancing Democracy in Morocco |
| Session Twenty | Ideological Challenges: the Rise of Islamic Fundamentalism and how it is countered by Nation and State.  
Readings: Mahi Binbine’s *Les Etoiles de Sidi Moumen*  
(translated as *Horses of God*)  
And the screening of Nabil Ayouch’s film based on the novel |
| Session Twenty-one | “Building a Democratic Muslim State”  
Reformation of the Religious Field  
Trip to *Dar A-Hadith Al-Hassania*  
-Presentation of Students’ Journals on various Aspects of Moroccan Culture and Society.