

THE ISLAM OF MOROCCO
SPRING TERM-FSP FEZ 2006
SYLLABUS

Week One Orientation Week

We have a full and demanding program this week as we get you oriented to Morocco and prepared for your homestays.

To remind you, the program is designed to give you a fast plunge into Moroccan Arabic as a Cultural System, so as to enable you to communicate with your host families. We will also orient you in the city, and provide some overview lectures to help you become oriented in Moroccan culture and history, as well. This will be the most intensive week of the program; if you work hard this week, the remainder of the term will be much more profitable.

Week Two: “Koine and Cosmopolitan Islam”

We will be arguing that Islam (like any world religion) can be understood as a kind of language, with a “standard” form, what we are going to call *koine* features and “dialects.”

Reading: Reinhart, “Koine and Cosmopolitan Islam” (provided)

“The Koine of Islam: The Rituals of Time; Orientation in Space”

In this week we will talk about the practices of Muslims that allow them to recognize each other as Muslims. These include the so-called “five pillars of Islam,” an commitment to the Quran as the foremost source of Muslim authority, the image and record of the Prophet as exemplar and amplification of the Quran.

* After a kind of Greek once spoken and written throughout the Mediterranean region by speakers of various languages, and used, among other things, to write the New Testament and some of the work of Philo. English functions as a *koine* in the world of natural science scholarship, for instance. Koine-speaking Turkish electrical engineers, for instance I’ve noticed, can speak fairly glibly about circuits and resistance to current, but have a hard time asking you if you’re having a nice time in Turkey.

Reading: Ruthven, *Islam: a Very Short Introduction*. Chapters 1-3; appendix; excerpts from Marjo Buitelaar, *Fasting and Feasting in Morocco*; *Women's Participation in Ramadan* (provided)

Week Three: The Moroccan Dialect of Islam: Baraka

In this week we'll discuss the aspects of Moroccan Islam (especially from the pre-modern period) that some scholars and Muslims from other regions of Islamdom might not recognize as "Islam." This is what anthropologists have often called "the little tradition," or "popular Islam," though what Islam might be if not the religion of the populace has never been clear to me.

NB: DUE TO MY RETURN TO THE STATES THIS CLASS WILL BE HELD

Reading: 2 stories from *Tales and Legends of Morocco* (provided); Westermark on "Baraka"

Week Four: Immanent Islam: Saints and Marabouts

Reading: Geertz, *Islam Observed*, chapters 1&2;

WEEK FIVE: AUTHORITY: TEACHERS, KINGS AND LAW

Reading: Hammoudi, *Master and Disciple*, Chapters 1, 2, 3; read the rest lightly. (Note this is "challenging" writing; give yourself plenty of time to read it and think about it.) Excerpt from Daisy Dwyer, *Images and Self Images* provided)

WEEK SEVEN: SCRIPTURALISM

Reading: Geertz, *Islam Observed*, chapters 3&4

WEEK EIGHT: THE PROBLEM OF GENDER

Reading: Ruthven, *Very Short Introduction*, chapter 5; Fatima Mernissi: *The Veil and the Male Elite*; (skim chapters 1,2, read 3, 4, 5, read lightly 6-9; read 10 and conclusion)..

Week Nine: Daily Islam; Lived Islam

Week Ten

Daily Assignments:

The most important component of your work in this class is your daily observations. *Islam and Islamicate culture are everywhere, and I want you to observe it. Your journal is the medium through which you will be recording the material for your final paper, but the most important source is your own experience in Morocco with your family and among Moroccans. Make every effort to jot down notes, even throughout the day, then briefly sketch an outline and write—something like 250 words is good—about what you have seen, heard, overheard, sensed, asked, been answered, and reflected upon during the day. Nothing you do during your time here will be as productive, and of course, no souvenir when you return will give you as much pleasure as a thoughtful set of reflections and field notes.*

Class Assignments

In addition to the reading assigned, I would ask you to read around a bit in the ALIF library from each class. Pull books from the shelves, use the Table of Contents and the Index, check out encyclopedia articles. Your instructor shares with his colleagues in the field what we might call a “data-set,” but like other scholars, he has a particular perspective, a “take” on the material. The course will work best if you don’t simply listen and take notes, but participate in the conversation, with the instructor and with his colleagues in the field.

I have tried to make assignments reasonable so that you can hang out with your family and Moroccan friends, and “be” in Morocco. So please make an effort to have the readings completed for each class.

Term Assignment:

You will write a paper on some aspect of the Islam of Morocco, drawing on your own observations, as well as research. Details to follow.