

Amideast Education Abroad Programs

HIST/MENA 313: Amazigh History and Culture Syllabus

Credit Hours: 3 credits

Program Location: Rabat, Morocco

Name of Instructor:

Term and Year:

Course Hours:

Office Hours: By Appointment

Contact Information: Please reach out to me via the Amideast Online System

Course Aims & Objectives:

This course aims to introduce students to one of the oldest cultures and civilizations in Africa. The course will focus on explaining how this culture functioned in the ancient times and how it fares today, in the era of total globalization. It will address questions about how the Amazigh culture has persevered through time, resisted the wear and tear of successive invading civilizations (Phoenicians, Carthaginians Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Vandals, Byzantines, Arabs, Europeans, etc.), and is still alive and thriving today. The Imazighen are very proud of their culture and are presently undergoing a cultural renaissance, especially after the official recognition of their civilization (The Royal Declaration of Ajdir in 2001) and the subsequent setting up of the Royal Institute of Amazigh Culture (Institut Royal de la Culture Amazighe, IRCAM) whose mission is to safeguard Amazigh culture from extinction and make provisions for teaching the language in schools. One of the first acts of this institute was the adoption of Tifinagh, an ancient Amazigh script, as the official alphabet of the Tamazight language in 2003. Since then, the Amazigh militants have been struggling for the recognition of their language as an official language to stand beside Arabic. In the wake of the Arab Spring, the Moroccan constitution was overhauled, and Tamazight was declared an official language.

Course Description:

This course is divided into six components: history, society, culture and traditions, beliefs, way of life, and language. It outlines the history of the Imazighen (or Berbers, North Africa's indigenous people) from ancient times. It covers how early Imazighen founded the scattered Libyan kingdoms of classical antiquity, later interacting with outsiders (Phoenician, Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Vandal, Byzantine), until the decisive Arab conquest. It then traces their adaptation to Arab culture and Islam, highlighted by the prestigious medieval Amazigh empires that made a bilingual Arab-Amazigh Morocco a force to be reckoned with in the Mediterranean world, and the all-pervading growth of Sufism, before an inward-looking sultanate in decline (17th-19th centuries) paved the way for colonial domination. The remainder of the course is devoted to the linguistic erosion suffered by the Amazigh tongue, the anti-colonial resistance period (1908-1934), the Amazigh renaissance of the after the 1980s, and today's identity crisis.

Learning outcomes for the course:

By the completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Describe the key features of Amazigh culture;
- Explain Amazigh societal organization;
- Understand the Amazigh way of thinking;
- Give examples of the intricacies of Amazigh civilization; and
- Explain the importance of the Tamazight language in the minds of the Amazigh and their lives.

Knowledge:

This course is designed to assist students to acquire and demonstrate knowledge about:

- Amazigh way of life;
- Amazigh way of thinking;
- Amazigh beliefs;
- Amazigh traditions;
- Amazigh language; and
- Amazigh nationalism.

Skills:

This course is designed to assist students in acquiring or enhancing the following skills:

- Scholarly research and writing;
- Oral presentation skills;
- Synthesizing material from multiple sources; and
- Intercultural communication.

Attitudes:

This course is designed to encourage development of the following attitudes:

- Openness to difference;
- Cultural relativism; and
- Empathy with the Amazigh struggle to survive in a difficult environment

Diversity:

Diversity in class is everything that makes both students and teachers different from each other. This includes many different factors: race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, ability, age, religious belief, or political conviction. All these factors work together to inform how students (and teachers, and everyone else) encounter the world. Therefore, one of the objectives of this class is to promote diversity by understanding each student brings unique experiences, strengths, and ideas to our classroom to enrich learning in our classroom.

Required Reading:

- 1) Brett, M. & E. Fentress. 1996. *The Berbers*, Oxford, UK: Blackwell. A few copies are available at Amideast and may be borrowed for short periods

The Imazighen occupy a huge area of North Africa from Morocco to western Egypt and as far south as Timbuktu and the Niger River. Historically, their influence extended to Sicily, southern Italy, and Spain and now enriches emigrant culture in contemporary France. They are not a single "people", but can be defined by their prehistoric Mediterranean origins, a common language (or languagegroup), and their historical tendency to seek refuge from a long succession of conquerors (Punic, Roman, Byzantine, Arab, Ottoman, French) in remote mountain or desert communities, where they could preserve their independence and way of life.

This book, by an archaeologist and a historian, provides an excellent summary of Amazigh history and culture. It casts a critical eye on the traditional historical sources (almost all written by the conquerors, not by the Imazighen themselves) and re-examines them in the light of contemporary archaeological and anthropological evidence. It is especially good in two areas: the Imazighen's relationship to Islam (their adopted religion) and the relative freedom of women in Amazigh society. The black-and-white illustrations and maps are of uneven quality but nevertheless helpful in visualizing this complex and little-known culture.

Recommended Readings:

1. Peyron, M. 2006. *The Amazigh Studies Reader*. Ifrane: AUI Press, (henceforth ASR).
2. Peyron, M. (Ed.). 2010. *Berber Odes from the Atlas Mountains*. Poetry of Place Series. London. UK: Eland Books.
3. Hoffman, K. 2009. *We Share Walls: Language, Land, and Gender in Berber Morocco*. Blackwell Studies in discourse & culture.
4. N-Ayt Attiq, M. & R. Euloge. 2008. *Tassawt Voices*. Ifrane: AUI Press.
5. Baker, Cynthia J. 2006. *Amazigh Arts in Morocco: Women Shaping Berber Identity*. University of Texas Press.
6. Chijioke Njoka, Raphael. 2006. *Culture and Customs of Morocco*. Greenwood Publishing Group.
7. Gellner, E. 1969. *Saints of the Atlas*. Weidenfeld & Nicolson.
8. Boele, Vincent. 2005. *Morocco: 5000 Years of Culture*. Kit Publishers.
9. Hoffman, Katherine & E. Susan Gilson Miller. 2010. *Berbers and Others: Beyond Tribe and Nation in the Maghrib*. Indiana University Press.
10. Westermarck, Edward. 1926. *Ritual and Belief in Morocco*. London. Can be downloaded from the Internet.
11. Shatzmiller, Maya. 2000. *The Berbers and the Islamic State: The Marīnid Experience in Pre-Protectorate Morocco*. Markus Wiener Publishers.
12. Barbatti, Bruno. *Berber Carpets of Morocco*. 2009. The Symbols: Origin and Meaning. www.acr-edition.com, Mar 15, 2009.
13. Sheean, Vincent. 1926. *An American among the Riffi*. New York.
14. Furneaux, Rupert. 1967. *Abdel Krim, Emir of the Rif*. London.
15. Waterbury, John. 1970. *The Commander of the Faithful: The Moroccan Political Elite - A Study in Segmented Politics*. New York.
16. Gellner, Ernest & Charles Micaud (eds.) 1973. *Arabs and Berbers: From Tribe to Nation in North Africa*. Lexington, Mass. and London.
17. Montagne, Robert. 1973. *The Berbers: Their Social and Political Organization*. London.

Assessment Overview:

Description	Weight	Due Date
Engagement	10%	Continuous
In-Class Presentations	15%	Finalize Topic: Week 2 Presentation: Week 10-11 see schedule
Reading Summaries	15%	2 submissions, due throughout the semester
Midterm Exam	20%	Week 7
End of Term Paper	20%	Finalize Topic: Week 3 First Draft: Week 9 Final paper submission: Week 14
Final Exam	20%	Week 15

Attendance and Engagement

Please adhere to the Attendance, Engagement, and Assessment Policies posted on the Amideast Online system

Presentations

In the first week, the class will be broken down into work groups of 2-3 students each. After this, each group will choose topics for their in-class presentation, and then have meetings with instructor. Presentations, including slideshow or video, will be made to rest of class during 10th and 11th weeks. The topic of the in-class presentation (group) may be expanded upon for further exploration in the final research paper (individual). The time allocated for each presentation is 20 minutes.

Midterm Exam

The midterm will be an in-class exam on.... Students choose one question (out of 3 or 4) and write an essay of about 1,000 words. Duration: 1:20.

Reading Summaries

Reading Summaries should be a minimum of 250 words and a maximum of 500 words (approximately 1-2 pages in standard formatting). All reading summaries must follow standard formatting requirements.

Reading Summaries require that you read a primary source selection from the end of each chapter, then write a short summary that identifies the thesis and outlines the main argument. Reading summaries are not about your opinion or perspective – they are expository essays that explain the content of the reading. All reading summaries must include substantive content based on the students reading of the material. When writing Reading Summaries, you may not quote the author without proper citations.

Research Paper

A major course requirement is the final (5,000-word) research paper on an original topic. This topic can be either a personal experience, or a project of a more analytical nature entailing library research and/or field work, with properly acknowledged citations from at least 10 bibliographical sources outside course textbooks. The choice of topics will be completed by 3rd week, after meeting and discussing with instructor, who subsequently keeps track of developments through regular one on one meetings. Students will need to submit a short summary of their proposed research topic at the end of week 3. Students will need to submit a proposal for the topic of this research paper on DATE, a first draft on DATE, and a final draft on DATE.

Final Exam

The final exam will be an in-class, open book exam during Week 15 of the Program. It will mainly cover material studied after the midterm exam. Students choose one question (out of 3 or 4) and write an essay of about 1,000 words. Duration: 1:15.

Weekly Course Schedule:

Week	Class Work		Exams, Trips and Holidays
Week 1	<p>Course Presentation: Defining and Presenting Approaches and Concepts</p> <p>Introduction to Berber Society, Language, and Identity.</p> <p>- Geographical Distribution of Berber Population in North Africa and Morocco.</p>	<p>- Amazigh Studies Reader (ASR) Ch. 1 by D.M. Hart "General considerations" (pp. 19-33)</p> <p>- ASR Ch. 2 M. Peyron, "Middle Atlas: Land of Heroes" (pp. 34-43)</p> <p>- ASR Ch. 3 by A. Arnais-Villena, "HLA Genes in Arabic-Speaking Moroccans" (pp.44-49)</p> <p>- Consult sources on 2nd Punic war and Hannibal's crossing of the Alps.</p>	Break down class into work groups.
Week 2	<p>Berbers in Ancient Times.</p> <p>- Warlike Confrontation and Cultural Links with Ancient Egypt, Carthage, Greece and Rome. Hannibal Crosses the Alps.</p>	<p>- ASR Ch. 4 by A. Vycichl "The Imazighen: 5000 Years of History" (pp. 50-55)</p> <p>- ASR Ch. 10 by M. Schatzmiller, "Myth of the Berbers' Origin" (pp. 106-119)</p>	Choosing topics for in-class presentations
Week 3	<p>Berber Origins and How They were Perceived (sometimes erroneously) by Medieval Arab Authors</p>	<p>- ASR Ch. 5 by H.T. Norris, "The Berbers and the Arabic Sources" (pp. 56-66)</p> <p>- ASR Ch.6 by H.T. Norris, "The Barghawata" (p. 67-80)</p>	Finalize choice of Research papers and provide a summary of the topic
Week 4	<p>- Amazigh Medieval History.</p> <p>- Rise and Fall of the Barghawata Kingdom: An Interesting Attempt to "Berbericize" Moroccan Islam</p>	<p>- ASR Ch. 7 by R. Pennell, "The Idrissids" (pp. 81-86)</p> <p>- ASR Ch. 8 by Z. Daoud, "Capture of Aghmat" (pp. 87-92)</p> <p>- ASR Ch. 9 by E.W. Bovill, "The Almoravids" (pp. 93-105)</p>	
Week 5	<p>- Medieval Berber Dynasties in Morocco: Almoravids, Almohads, Marinids, and Wattasids.</p>	<p>- ASR Ch. 11 by Leo Africanus, "Seggheme, Magran & Dedes" (pp. 120- 123)</p> <p>- ASR Ch. 12 by J. Chiapuris, "The Dila' zawiya and Berber revolt" (pp. 124-131)</p>	

Week 6	- Evolution of the Makhzan Concept	- ASR Ch. 20 by Harry Stroomer, "Overview of Moroccan history" (pp. 174-177)	
Week 7	Makhzan vs. Imazighen: Preserving an Uneasy Balance. - The Alawite Sultanate Holds the Plains and Moves Against any Attempt at Creating Berber Power Base in Mountains.	- ASR Ch. 13 by J.G. Jackson, "West Barbary" (pp. 132-136) - ASR Ch. 14 by al-Massi, "Massa, Tazerwalt and Tamgrout" (pp. 137-142) - ASR Ch. 23 by A. Lakhsassi, "Tomb of Sidi Hmad u-Musa" (pp. 202-210)	Midterm Exam
Week 8	Break		
Week 9	Nomadic and Sedentary Communities: Tribes, Saints and Robber Barons in the Atlas Mountains.	- ASR Ch. 15 by R. Montagne, "Great Makhzan Qayds" (pp. 132-147) - ASR Ch. 16 by Scott O'Connor "Battle of El Herri" (pp. 148-153)	
Week 10	Resistance Period (1908-1934) and End of Heroic Age	- Peyron paper in: "Battle of Tazizaout" (cf. Michael Peyron.unblog.fr) - ASR Ch. 17 by Ward Price "Surrender of Mountaineers" (p. 154-162) - ASR Ch. 18 by D.M. Hart, "Zayd u Hmad's War against France" (pp. 163- 167)	
Week 11	- Harsh Post-Protectorate Reality - Coming to Terms with Independence and Nation-Building. - Classic Amazigh Society and the Modern Age: Seeds of Discontent and Berber Socio-Cultural Decline During the Period 1956-1980.	- ASR Ch. 21 by D.M. Hart, "Customary Law Document" (pp. 178-186) & Ch. 22 - "Customs among Ayt 'Atta" (pp. 187- 201) - ASR Ch. 25 by M. Taifi, "The Old Woman" (pp. 220-222)	In-class presentations

Week 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - King Hassan II and the Emerging Amazigh Identity Crisis. - Academic Warfare. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ASR, Ch. 26 by E. Gellner, "The Battle for Morocco's Past"; Ch. 27 by A. Vinogradov, "French Conceptual Frameworks" (pp. 230-241) - Tassawt Voices(TV) (pp. 136-141) - Unpublished 12-page article by M. Peyron, "The Berbers, Officialdom and Academia", course-pack. 	Final advice on research papers
Week 13	The Amazigh Renaissance Gains Momentum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ASR Ch. 29 by M. Peyron, "Bringing Berber Oral Literature out of the Academic Wilderness" (pp. 266-284) - ASR Ch. 30 by D. Crawford, "How 'Berber' Matters in the Middle of Nowhere" (pp. 285-296) - ASR Ch. 31 by B. Himmich, "What about the Berber Problem?" (pp. 297- 303) - ASR Ch. 32 by M. Chafik, "The Berber Substratum of Maghrebi Culture" (pp. 304-315) 	
Week 14	<p>Berbers in Contemporary Morocco.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - King Mohammed VI and his 2001 Ajdir Speech Announcing Founding of a Berber Institute (IRCAM) - Preserving Amazigh culture today. 	Visit to the Royal Institute for Amazigh Culture - IRCAM in Rabat	Final Research Paper Due
Week 15	Final Exam		
Week 16	Reflection Week		