American Travelers in the Maghreb

DESCRIPTION:
Since the early 20th century an increasing number of distinguished American writers, artists, scholars, diplomats and travelers have made their ways to Morocco. The texts which many of them left reflect complex and widely varied perspectives of the country both as a site of actual travel and residence, and as a cultural construct defined, as it were, as the realm of imagined Otherness. This course provides an in-depth analysis of a selection of American writings (travel, academic, and literary texts). The scheduled materials are studied not only as individual texts grounded in specific tempo-spatial contexts with clearly defined cultural and intellectual implications, but also as a body of collective reflections on the heterogeneous (Islamic/Arab/Berber/African/Mediterranean/Post-colonial) identities of Morocco. In this pursuit, recourse is made to various critiques of colonial discourse and travel theory.

METHOD OF PRESENTATION: A combination of seminar, lectures, student’s presentations, films and documentaries

LEARNING OUTCOMES:
By the end of the course, students will be able to:
• Discuss critical knowledge of American representations
• Better understand Moroccan American cultural relations;
• Be familiar with postcolonial concepts and theories.

METHOD OF ASSESSEMENT:
To validate this course, students should attain a minimum total score of 50/100. Assessment involves the following activities;

a- Written Reports 20% (typed and double spaced)
b- Class Participation 20%
c- A 20 minute presentation 20%
d- A 2000 word essay 40%

Students are required to submit regular reports of materials scheduled for home reading. Both the reports and class participation will constitute 40% of the general mark. Beside reports, each student will deliver a 20 minute oral presentation based on one or more of the texts below. The presentation accounts for 20% of the overall score. Finally, each student is required to submit a 2000 word essay by the end of the term. The essay should be original and reflect the student’s own individual work. The essay receives 40% of the total mark. Students are supposed to start work on their essays at an early stage and should consult the lecturer for support and orientation.
CONTENTS:

I- Introduction

1- Introduction and Methodology

2- Barbary Captivity: Early American Narratives of North Africa

II- Writing Morocco

3- The Grand Tour: Exoticism and Orientalism
(Mark Twain, The Innocents Abroad, 1869 (travel narrative), chapts. 8 & 9;
Washington Irving, "Legend of the Arab Astrologer“ in Tales of Alhambra, 1832 (travel / literary narrative)
Said, Edward “Redrawn Frontiers, Redefined Issues, Secularized religion” in Orientalism, pp. 113-123. (Critical study)

4- A Female View of Colonialism: Edith Wharton and the French mission civilisatrice
Edith Wharton, extracts from In Morocco (1919) (travel narrative)

5- The Lure of the Margins: Folklore, Literature and Fantasy
William Burroughs, “International Zone” in Interzone, 1989 (Short Story)
Paul Bowles, “The Rif to Music” in Their Heads Are Green, 1963 (travel narrative)
Paul Bowles, “A distant Episode” Stories, 1988 (short story)
Hibbard, Allen, Paul Bowles, Magic and Morocco. San Fransisco: Cadmus, 2004 (critical study)

Submission of Term Paper
6- Gender, Multiculturalism and Modernity
Elizabeth Warnock Fernea, extracts from A Street in Marrakech, 1975 (travel narrative)
Elizabeth Warnock Fernea “Marrakech, Morocco, Morocco” in The Arab World: Personal Encounters eds Elizabeth Fernea and Robert A Fernea.

RECOMMENDED READINGS: